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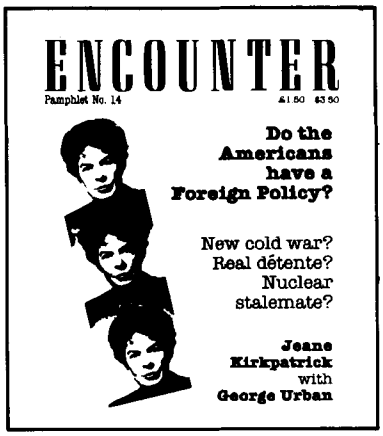

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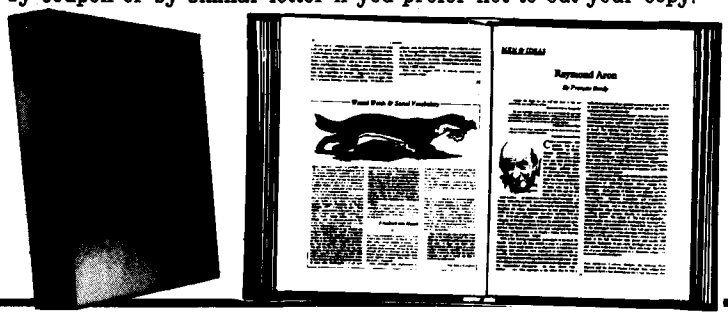

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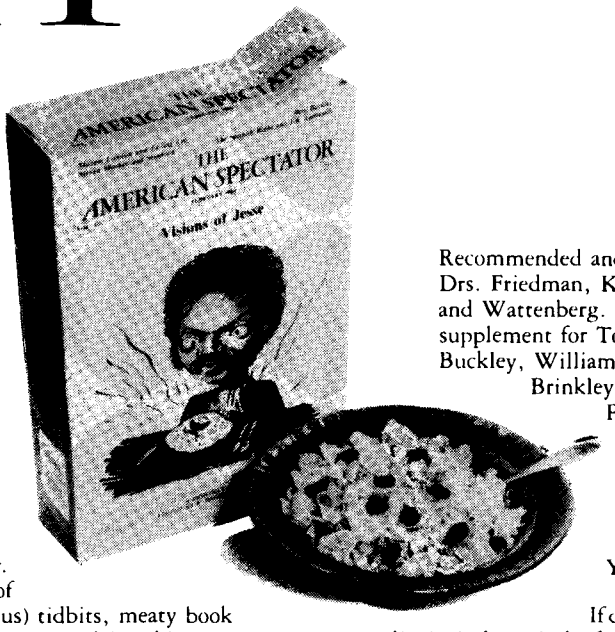

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William Bedford

The Painter's Daughter

It was a good drying day, with a cold wind blowing straight out to sea and clouds scudding across Spurn Point where the lighthouse showed clearly against the horizon. Ruth worked all morning at the washing-tub, pounding the clothes with the wooden dolly George's mother had given her and then wringing them through the mangle and hanging them on the clothes-line down the yard. Working hard, she had the half-dried clothes round the fire by early afternoon, and managed to scrub the window-ledges before the shirts were ready to iron. She liked to bottom the house every week, and yellowed the ledges and doorsteps with a scouring-stone as often as possible.

"You want to let up a bit", her neighbour Helen Collins used to tease her, standing in the yard with a cup of tea. "You'll be doin' yoursen an injury."

Ruth laughed, but didn't really listen.

She was glad to have a house backing on to Suggits Bay, and determined not to let the grime get a hold. This close to the dock area, you couldn't escape the early morning racket of the lumpers' wooden clogs, or the hiss of the gas lamps down quays and narrow streets. From her back-bedroom window, the miles of cranes along the fish docks towered like a black metal fretwork, looming out of dawns that were usually thick with yellow fog. Sometimes she felt hemmed in, and the railway running behind the houses meant a lot of extra filth and noise. The smell from the kippering factories was foul.

But if they had to live anywhere near the fish docks, this was where she wanted to be. Standing in her backyard, she could see across the estuary to Spurn Point, and it took the distant-water trawlers just an hour to steam from Spurn Light to the lock gates of the main fish dock. She wouldn't have recognised George's ship even with a pair of binoculars, but that didn't matter. She knew roughly when he was due back, and she could watch the horizon for the trailing black smoke that meant the Arctic fleet was returning. She could keep an eye out for the tides, and be down at the pontoons within minutes. Even if it was filthy, she wasn't going to move to another house and lose that. Not until George got his skipper's ticket, anyway.

Taking a breath from scrubbing the kitchen window-sills, she looked over the railway tracks to the wide mouth of the estuary. George was out there somewhere, fishing on the Arctic grounds. He was a deck-hand on the *Laughing Lass*, and this trip they were looking for cod round North Cape and on to Cape Kanin and Novaya Zemlya.

Sometimes he told her about the trips. The long seas flinging spray over the bows so that it poured in torrents down the whaleback and into the fish pounds. The well-deck and whaleback covered with snow and ice, thick icicles hanging from the masts and winches, hoar-frost on the bridge windows. A pale ghostly twilight for just two hours in the middle of the day, and then a brief mauve dusk before the endless darkness, shrieking with wind and driving rain.

"Mug of tea in the wheel-house", he used to grin. "That's all you need to keep you warm. And it's all you get."

She could feel him move now, rolling and pitching over the grey mountains of water, dark clouds blotting out the horizon and hail-stones lashing into his face as he gutted the last catch. She could almost hear him, singing with the other deck-hands in the fish pounds.

She wished he would give up. The North Sea trawlermen earned much less, but they weren't away for weeks at a time with just thirty-six hours at home between trips. The men working the North Sea trawlers covered the North Sea, the southern Norwegian coast, Iceland and the Faroes. Some of them got no further than the Dogger Bank. They were never gone longer than ten days, and some of them got home every weekend.

But George wouldn't listen.

"White Sea trade's the best", he told her, refusing to discuss a change. "You'd be mad to get out. You like the money, don't you?"

After the big catches in the 1920s, over-fishing had caused problems in the North Sea. The Arctic trawlers went further and further north, beyond Bear Island where the insurance companies wouldn't even quote a premium. Even George detested Bear Island. But he wouldn't think about changing. He wouldn't even talk about it.

Scrubbing vigorously at the window-ledge, Ruth thought about her young husband. He was twenty-three, a year younger than herself. They'd been married two years, and now she was carrying their first child. He wanted a son.

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"Who'll not go to sea", he insisted, like all the fishermen she knew.

He wanted a son to waste his money on and think about when he was fishing out in the Arctic.

Ruth stopped and held her breath. She stared at the yellowed window-sill and remembered George's face, laughing at her across a dance floor. She'd come to the local seaside resort on a day trip from Sheffield, and some of the girls dragged her along to the Locarno. George had been there, drinking with his mates on one of their thirty-six-hour turnabouts, and he'd picked her out because of her unruly red hair and thin face, and danced with her the whole evening.

When she got back to Sheffield and told her mother she was going to marry a fisherman, her mother laughed.

"Lady la-di-da", she sneered. "I thought you had more sense."

"He's going to be a skipper", Ruth said.

"Oh aye."

"He's going to do his exams and get his mate's ticket and then. . . ."

"Stuck up n'all, is he?" her mother snorted.

Ruth cried that night in bed. Her tears could be heard through the thin walls. "Better than this dump", she wept bitterly into her pillow, leaving her eyes red and bruised in the morning. Five children and four adults had lived in the narrow terraced house, two up and two down with an outside lavatory shared by the street. Once she was married she never went back, and her mother didn't come to the wedding. Her father had been dead for several years.

SHE PULLED HERSELF TOGETHER and gave the window-ledge a final brush. George had failed his exams twice. He didn't boast about getting his skipper's ticket any more, but each time he came home from a trip she got the books out for him to study.

"You have to do something now", she said, when she told him she was pregnant. "If you got your mate's ticket, you could go on the North Sea grounds and we wouldn't lose any money. I don't want my child never seeing his dad."

George laughed and agreed. He even started giving her his poundage, the money the deck-hands got from a successful trip, over and above their weekly wages. Most fishermen kept the poundage for themselves, and left the two pounds weekly wages to be collected by their wives or mothers from the Company's offices. Every Friday Ruth walked down to the docks and stood in the queue with the other women. She hated their loud gossip and snide questions. She told them her husband was still studying, and kept herself apart, standing on her own with her shopping basket. She hated the walk down to the docks over all the level-crossings.

"I've never known a town with so many railway tracks", she grumbled angrily to Helen, after one of the wives had asked her if George was a skipper yet. Helen was the only fisherman's wife she ever talked to.

Perhaps it would be all right. George would settle down to his exams and get to be mate on a home-waters trawler. Having a son could make the difference. A responsibility, instead of all his talk about winning the football pools. She'd stopped posting them for him, refusing to waste money, but he still put money into the ship's sweepstake, and listened to the results over the ship's wireless every Saturday. Town were in the First Division, and he looked at her with surprise when she asked him why he was wasting their money.

"You could say that about Hull . . .", he joked, but she didn't understand.

"You might have a son", she snapped at him, and then burst out crying, furious at his laughter.

Along from the docks, the sound of a ship's siren carried bleakly, and Ruth glanced up into the kitchen window. She could hear a rag-and-bone man down the street shouting out for jam-jars and old clothes in exchange for goldfish. A barrel-organ was playing at the dock gates.

She stared into the window. The blazing sunset was making the sky deep red behind her, and she could see her face reflected in the glass of the window. She was still as thin and pale as the night George first met her, her high cheek-bones sharp beneath the skin, her eyes shining and excited. Her red hair, brushed casually back off her forehead, shimmered in the red light.

AS THE SUN SANK behind the docks, the kitchen window seemed to glow, burning like a fire in her eyes. Flames danced and leapt about her head. She stood back and gasped suddenly, straightening and then leaning forward as the baby gave a sharp kick and she felt the pain beneath her swollen breasts.

"George", she said quietly, taking a deep swallow for air but keeping her eyes fixed on the window. "George." Round her head, great flames of sunset flickered, reddening the winter sky. Blue sparks glittered with frost. She felt her breath coming in harsh, quick gasps, the pain in her stomach gripping her tensed muscles.

She remembered the horrible cellar. They kept the coal down there and rats scurried in the shadows, hiding when you went down for coal. Because she was the oldest, she had to keep the coal-scuttle full, going down the dank steps with a candle and shovelling the coal with a flat shovel. If a rat squeaked in the corners, she had to bite her lips to stop herself screaming.

"They'll not touch you", her mother snapped. "They'll not run up your bloody skirts."

Her mother liked to sit in the rocking-chair by the fire, her big arms folded across her apron, her eyes twinkling with malicious laughter as she watched Ruth get the bucket and go down into the cellar.

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When he was there, her father always filled the bucket himself.

"It'll not break my back", he would laugh quietly if her mother started playing hell. "She's only a lass."

But her father was not always there. He worked as a painter and decorator with one of the big breweries in Sheffield and was often late getting home from some pub out on the moors. He left home at six in the morning, and it was sometimes midnight before he got back.

"You'll have it cut", he said, when she begged him to let her grow it once more, and when she looked into his eyes, she never felt like arguing.

Shortly after the fire, he took her for a picnic one Sunday, and painted a picture of her in water-colours as she had been before the accident. A girl on the edge of the moors, with long, red hair, hanging loosely down to her waist. He gave her the picture without ever telling her why, and died a few years later.

HE WAS AT HOME on this night. He'd been on the panel for a week with bronchitis, and was sitting by the fire in the rocking-chair, nursing a mug of hot cocoa. The breath wheezed through his chest, and as he stared into the fire, clasping his hands round the warm mug, the flames got slowly smaller until there was no coal left in the scuttle and her mother snapped at her to get it filled.

"You don't expect your father to go, do you", she sneered, "when he can't even bring the money in."

Ruth jumped up and lit the candle they kept for the cellar. She had been thinking about the coal for several minutes, watching the fire and dreading the damp steps and the rats squealing in the darkness. But she was determined not to let her father know. She lit the candle and ran down the steps without thinking about what was below, waiting for her in the clammy darkness.

The candle guttered at the sudden movement. The flame licked up into her face, and before she knew what was happening her long red hair was alight and she was screaming out in terror, the flames crackling round her head and the stink of singeing hair choking her nostrils and making her eyes weep.

Her father was down the cellar steps in seconds. He pulled his dressing-gown off and wrapped it over her head with his bare arms, folding her into his chest and smothering the flames before they could leave a mark on her face or neck. He shouted her name, rocking her backwards and forwards in his arms, but she scarcely remembered a thing he said. In her panic, she cried into the hot blanket, and passed out before her father had got her back upstairs. She lay unconscious for several hours, and when the doctor came, didn't seem to understand the questions. She sat about the house for a week, and after that, never went down into the cellar again.

Her mother tried to make a joke of it.

"Good job you had long hair", she laughed when the singed ends began to grow out and the colour slowly returned. "Don't know what would have happened otherwise."

Her father never let her grow it long again. He took her himself to the hairdresser's. He wouldn't let her grow a pigtail when they were fashionable. He looked distressed when the short curls began to lengthen.

IN THE SMALL BACKYARD overlooking the estuary, Ruth stood at her kitchen window and stared into the winter sunset. Helen Collins stood at her side, watching her warily and smoking a cigarette.

"You all right, pet?" she asked when Ruth glanced at her. "You 'aving a turn?"

Ruth nodded, and suddenly felt faint, reaching out her hand for the window-sill and leaning against it awkwardly.

"Better get you inside", Helen said. "I told you to let it rest, didn't I?"

Opening the kitchen door, Helen led her into the sitting-room and made her sit down at the table by the window. She was always wanting to get inside Ruth's house, and wouldn't listen now as Ruth said she would be all right.

"Cup of tea for you, ducks", she grinned, patting Ruth on the shoulder and stubbing her cigarette out on the doorstep. "I'll find the things, never you mind. You just sit there and 'ave a minute."

In the kitchen, Helen filled the kettle and got cups and saucers from the cupboard. She moved Ruth's washing from round the fire and laughed about the freshly-washed curtains.

"You'll get this terrace a bad name", she said, scalding the teapot and opening cupboards to find the tea. When she found Ruth's plate of pig's feet and chitterlings, she joked about starvation diets.

"I was going to get some piccalilli", Ruth explained. "From the corner shop." She felt sick as she said it, and Helen raised her eyebrows in mockery.

"Hunger's t'best sauce, lass", she said. "That's what I tell my Frank if he starts grumbling. Anyroad, you should be having something hot, state you're in."

They sat together at the table. Helen made up the fire and lit a cigarette. A thin mist hung over the yard and the bell on the fog buoy rang dismally out at the estuary, warning the ships that fog was drifting up the river. In the docks, a ship's siren whistled, and the music from the barrel-organ petered out into silence, leaving them with the crackling fire and the distant thundering of the tide, the waves running up Suggits Sands.

"We're short of nowt we've got then", Helen laughed when Ruth asked her if she would like a piece of cake, and fetched it herself from the cupboard,

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insisting that Ruth sit quiet. "You'll not have that baby if you don't stop mithering", she warned good-humouredly, and brought plates and knives from the kitchen. "I don't know what your young skipper'd say if he knew."

Ruth ignored the jibe. There was nothing ill-natured about Helen. She sat at the table, smoking cigarettes and helping herself to cake. Her hair was still in curlers, kept in place by a headscarf, and she laughed out loud when she caught Ruth looking at her.

"I'm going out, kid", she giggled. "Can't spoil me night out with Monday washing, can I? Besides, you do enough for the two of us."

Ruth couldn't eat her piece of cake. She finished the tea in her cup and stared at her neighbour. Frank Collins was on the same ship as George. They'd been deck-hands together since leaving school, and always tried to get the same berth.

"Going out?" she asked lamely, seeing her white face looking back at her from the window.

"Couple of salesmen from Sheffield", Helen grinned. "Taking us to the pictures. I was going to ask you. You want to come?"

Ruth said nothing, and after a long silence, Helen shrugged and lit another cigarette. She sat back in her chair and smiled at Ruth.

"You won't say anything?" she said, and Ruth shook her head.

"It's not my business."

Helen laughed crudely.

"Wouldn't stop most folk round 'ere, luv", she grinned. "I thought you might like a night out. You look like you need it. They're nice blokes."

Again Ruth shook her head, unable to speak, and Helen smoked in silence, watching her. In the yard, the few clothes left on the washing-line stiffened with frost. A thick fog obscured the fence at the bottom of the yard and the lights of the buoys along Suggits Sands.

As Helen was about to speak again, Ruth looked up and interrupted her.

"My father was a painter", she said abruptly, her cheeks flushing and her eyes very bright in the firelight.

Helen stared at her, open-mouthed, not speaking.

"He was a painter", Ruth said again, and then looked down at her empty cup, the piece of cake left on her plate.

"I know, pet", Helen said. "Your George told us that. Worked for a brewery, didn't he?"

After a few minutes, Helen got up, but Ruth wouldn't let her help with washing the tea things. She said goodnight, and Helen went back to her own house, leaving her alone in the kitchen, fixing the gas light and preparing to boil water for the pots. When they were done, she would have to start the ironing. While she waited for the water, she went outside and fetched the last of the washing.

Tribes

("Here's tae us—wha's like us?")

Are tribes a good thing?
Or are they bad, and ugly—
as smugly they hug themselves
over a victory, football or cricket
or almost anything?

Irish, Welsh or Scots—
should they pride themselves so
on Kelso? do they smell so
terrifically sweet? what about their feet?
English, Irish, Welsh or Scots?

You could pride yourself
on looking like Cardinal Newman,
on being a woman or human or
deft or left-handed, or "gentry" or "landed."
You *could* pride yourself.

But it's all a bit fake,
a bit bogus and silly—
a big willie, being a hill-billy,
most pride is foolish. Stubborn and mulish
but in the end a bit fake!

Gavin Ewart

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Nirad C. Chaudhuri

My Views of the Real East-West Conflict

FIFTY YEARS AGO, the adjective "real" in my title would not have been necessary, for every educated person then would have known or heard of only one East-West conflict: that which was first described by Herodotus and, in recent times, commented on by Kipling—that is to say, the conflict or antithesis between Asia and Europe.

But by a misleading extension of usage, the words *East* and *West* are now employed to denote the lateral extremities of the same world, i.e., the European world, and, as a corollary, the antagonism of the two great Powers occupying these extremities is described as *the* East-West conflict. This is certainly correct as an indication of mere orientation, but it is not so historically. The new East-West conflict is really an *intra-European* conflict, and in its present form it is only the latest cycle of a recurrent intra-European conflict, fought in the first round between Spain and England, in the second between France and England, and in the third between Germany and England. That the protagonists in the conflict are now different and that geographically it has become intercontinental, has not changed its historical character. These departures are due to the westward and eastward expansion of Europe. The rivalry is still between the first two Powers which are European both ethnically and culturally. The centre of gravity of the conflict, too, remains in Western Europe.

There should have been no such deflection of usage for the words East and West to describe what was only the next phase of an old European quarrel. That is not merely suppressing a time-honoured historical association, but also doing practical harm by hiding or at least obscuring from view the old East-West conflict regarded by me as the true one, although it is more virulent and extensive today than it was at any time in its two thousand and five hundred years of burning or smouldering. As I see the matter, there will be neither Salamis nor Plataea in it, but in the last resort an Alexandrine conclusion to it is conceivable. The jubilant Oriental rulers of today might, like Polycrates the Tyrant of Samos, wear a ring on their fingers inscribed with the word Persepolis.

There is, however, a close correlation today between the parallel conflicts, which is making each of them more sinister than it would have been singly. At present, to each of the conflicts, there is a *tertius gaudens*, interested in keeping it alive and even aggravating it. In plain words, the Russians, disguised as the Soviet Union, are the happy third party in the old East-West conflict, whereas the Orientals, posing as the meek "Third World", are taking advantage of the new East-West conflict. Each conflict has a vested interest in the other. It was a German soldier of genius, General Max Hoffmann, who, besides imposing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on the Bolsheviks, also proclaimed the interest of the Kremlin in the non-European world, even in 1922; he was set down as an eccentric. I have been trying to reveal the interest of the non-European world in the new European conflict and have been, as you will see, treated as the same kind of eccentric. . . .

With this passing indication of the bearing of each of the conflicts on the other, I shall leave the miscalled East-West conflict alone, and describe the old one, whose continuance even, not to speak of its morbid exacerbation, is being virtually ignored in the West.

LET ME BEGIN by defining the conflict more precisely.

> "It reveals an estrangement between peoples affiliated with European civilisation on the one hand, and the Hindu and Islamic on the other. Of course, not all Europeans are in one camp, no more are all the Asians. Internal circumstances peculiar to each group stand in the way of a total mobilisation. Nevertheless, the division, even as it is today, gives expression to the most irreconcilable and deep-seated cleavage yet seen in history.
>
> If the seriousness of an antagonism is to be measured by the virulence of the passional toxins generated by it, there can be no comparison between the real East-West conflict and that between the West and the Soviet Union. There is something cold-blooded about the 'Cold War'; it gives the impression of being controlled by reasoning; it can be turned off and on at will, which suggests that it is an instrument of *Realpolitik*, and *that* it *is*.
>
> But the hatred of the West simmering all over the East is of a different order altogether. It is part and parcel of the emotional being of these ancient peoples—a predisposition coursing through the blood-stream, with power to wreck rationally-devised policies. It is an antipathy which, arising from historical experience, has bitten into the subconscious to become a self-propagating

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> emotion capable of discovering ever new grievances to feed itself. Yet its manifestation so far has only been a part of its real and latent magnitude."

You will be surprised to be told that the definition of the conflict I have just read out to you, has been taken verbatim from an article written by me early in 1957, almost 30 years ago. Since then, the extension and the intensification I anticipated have taken place. More significantly, one specific extension I expected at the time has come about. I said that Dark Africa was being drawn into the old East-West conflict. And it has been.

That article of mine has remained unpublished to this day, and its story is worth telling because it would show what my thesis is up against. Immediately after writing it, I sent it to the well-known American journal *Foreign Affairs*, which accepted it enthusiastically. In June 1957, I received full payment for it, and expected it to appear in the July issue. But I was soon informed that it would not be published, and I was being compensated for my labours with the honorarium. The ostensible reason for the final rejection was utterly unconvincing, for it could have been given at the very beginning.

After that I tried other outlets, but to no purpose. At last, in my desperation, I sent the piece to the supreme architect of the failure of American foreign policy in the 1970s, Dr Henry Kissinger, in the hope that he would find in it the reason for his failures. But he was then engaged with the publication of his voluminous apologia for them, and could not take me up.

I HAVE NO DIFFICULTY, of course, in understanding the American resistance to my thesis. It runs counter to the strongest emotional predisposition of the American people, which dictates the practical expression of the foreign policy of their country. They just cannot believe that anybody in the world can be so perverse as to hate so lovable a people. Therefore, if they see any sign of hatred for themselves in any nation, they do not blame that nation, but themselves for their own remissness in not giving as much money to it as they ought. When Lyndon Johnson, as Vice-President of the United States, visited India, he was one day being taken through the Old City of Delhi. Before the great Mosque, the Jami Masjid, he saw huge crowds in what he must have considered rags, gazing at him, and the American afflatus came upon him. His spirit was stirred in him as was St Paul's at Athens. He jumped down from the car, shouting: "Hi, folks! We want to help you." This impulse, dictated to them by their philanthropic narcissism, gains accelerated momentum as the Americans see more and more antipathy to themselves. So, in order to appease unappeasable enemies, they betray their friends. No nation in all history holds, or ever held, such a record of being false to its friends as they. Thus they provide every incentive to those who hate them to keep up the hatred. All non-Europeans know the usefulness of their hatred as cobras know the value of their venom.

This explains my failure in America. In view of that, you may easily imagine my delight and surprise at being given a platform at last in the London School of Economics. My surprise arises from finding myself speaking in the very institution which for decades had been my *bête noire*. An accumulation of circumstances created that prejudice in me, and I shall relate only one of them, for that will be an illustration for my argument.

Early in 1941 a Bengali barrister, who had taken his degree of doctorate at the London School of Economics, told me that the Germans neither would nor could ever be defeated by Britain. When I asked him why, he replied with the most dogmatic assurance: "Because *Non-science* can never prevail over *Science*." As he had not been in the Cavendish or the Clarendon Laboratory, nor even in the Imperial College of Science, but only at the LSE, I, who had no firsthand knowledge of England because I did not come to this country before I was fifty-seven—and had no social contacts with Englishmen in India until I was fifty-five, and had not learnt one word of the English language, nor one thing about English literature, history, life, or civilisation from *any* Englishman—*I*, in my ignorance, naturally attributed the *Herr Doktor*'s contempt for England to his experiences here. I now see that I was mistaken, and his opinion was due, not to the nurture of this Institution, but to his nature. The truth of the old dictum "*Abeunt studia in mores*" was not being proved by his doctorate. On the contrary, he was furnishing fresh proof for the dictum of Julien Benda, that we do not hate somebody because he is bad, but think him bad because we hate him. Hatred, like the heart, has its reasons, of which reason knows nothing.

In proof whereof, I shall give you some information about the anti-British feeling amongst Indians which *would* surprise you. In India, I met scores of Bengali revolutionaries, extremist nationalist politicians, and many eminent nationalist leaders implacably opposed to British rule. But never did I see in them the rancorous hatred for Britain which I always found in the Indians educated in England. It seemed to have begun with their first arrival here in the '60s of the last century. At that time, Max Müller, the most Indophile European of the age, was a professor here. He had exceptional opportunities for observing the Indian students, and towards the end of his life he wrote as follows about them in his recollections:

> "I am afraid that some of them return to India not much improved by their English exile. The worst of it is that they often return *désillusionné* . . . so that they often leave England better informed, it may be, but hardly better affected towards the Government which they are meant to serve."

And his comment was: "The present state of things is certainly discouraging, particularly as it seems impossible to suggest any real remedy." The tendency grew as more and more Indians came. The two men who were the foremost young nationalists in the Gandhian era, and also the most extreme, were both educated at Cambridge. Mahatma Gandhi, too, got whatever worthwhile education he had in England. The Indians from Oxford, however, did not develop the same acuteness of rancour as the others, because that august institution emulsified the hatred by inculcating even in its Indian students some of its rarefied self-conceit. Even so, I

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have heard unsuccessful Indians there complaining that they were not given a first class degree or a doctorate because they were "Black." But if Oxford fell short, the London School of Economics made up for that. Its Indian students showed the most sterile and corrosive hatred for Britain. I descry before me some of the elders of the LSE, and I would say to them: "*O voi che sapete*! You will recall the most eminent of them." Perhaps this was due to the nature of the subjects taught here, namely, Economics and Political Science. There are no disciplines more dangerous for characters with inbuilt hatreds than these two. Yet it is precisely these which have the strongest attraction for that type. The only justification for seeking knowledge is to procure help in living. As it is, he that increases knowledge increases sorrow; and if in addition knowledge is divorced from life, it often tends to foster, especially in the universities, vanity and vexation of spirit.

MY THESIS IS that there is an irreconcilable antagonism between the non-European peoples who were formerly subject to European rule, and their one-time rulers, especially the British—the Americans being regarded as the heirs of the British and more dangerous because young. To this I would add the rider that the disappearance of European imperialism from every part of the world except the Soviet Union has made no difference to the hostility. In this, however, there is a great paradox. There is no active or even passive resistance to *living* imperialism; the hostility is towards the imperialism which is *extinct*. It is as if after its death European rule over non-Europeans had become a malevolent spirit to haunt the countries in which it once flourished. The whole attitude is a continuation of the past into the present.

This thesis I shall try to illustrate by considering the foreign policy of India since Independence, when she became entitled to have a foreign policy of her own. I shall be restricting my exposition to only a section of the subject; but this is imposed on me because on this occasion I cannot even try to be exhaustive. But the restriction of treatment makes it necessary for you to keep in mind one qualification. The antagonism is now less acute in India than in the Islamic world and in Africa.

As a new sovereign state, India could be expected to begin her foreign policy as France did when she emerged as a modern state. That has been described by Albert Sorel in these words:

> "*La politique des Capétiens, considéré dans sa suite et dans sa tradition, a eu deux objets principaux: à l'intérieur, former une nation homogène et un Etat cohérent; à l'extérieur, assurer par de bonnes frontières l'indépendance de la nation et la puissance de l'Etat.*"
>
> "The politics of the Capet dynasty, taken by and large, had two main objectives: internally, to form a homogeneous nation and a unitary State; externally, to ensure the nation's independence and the State's power by means of effective frontiers."

Leaving aside the internal task, the requirements thus indicated were almost the categorical imperatives for France. Long after her foreign policy had taken its final shape, Rousseau wrote:

> "*La situation des montagnes de l'Europe, des mers et des fleuves qui servent de bornes aux nations qui l'habitent, semble avoir décidé du nombre et la grandeur de ces nations, et l'on peut dire que l'ordre politique de cette partie du monde est, à certains égards, l'ouvrage de la nature. . . .*"
>
> "The location of Europe's mountains, seas, and rivers, which act as boundaries to the nations within it, seems to have determined the number and size of these nations; and it may be said that the political system of this part of the world is in some respects a product of Nature itself."

So France's natural frontiers were claimed not only by Louis XIV and Danton, but also by Marshal Foch at the Versailles Conference.

Now, anyone who has studied the political history of India from at least 327 BC will say the same thing about the primary aims of any foreign policy for India. No country is more clearly demarcated by geography, and yet no country is more open to invasions. Therefore India, too, needed to have her natural frontiers, which, ideally, should run along the Hindu Kush, its south-western extension, the main Himalayas, and their extension to the south-east. As, in these days, the acquisition of such a frontier politically is not possible, the least that India should have done in 1947 was to have created them indirectly by forming a block of defence with Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, and Burma.

But India did nothing of the kind, and even destroyed the possibility of such an alliance. Instead, she adopted a foreign policy which could not strictly be called foreign policy at all. What it was can be most vividly illustrated by applying to it the English proverb that a man is known by the company he keeps. My father used to rub in its moral on his sons by a parable. He said that a washerman went to another washerman to sell one of his donkeys. The second man, keeping in mind the maxim *caveat emptor*, asked him to leave the donkey for three days so that he could decide. But when the seller came to hear the decision, the second washerman said: "Take it back! I won't buy it, for it has gone and made friends with the laziest of my own donkeys!"

What company did India choose for her foreign policy? What was self-evident was that she did not choose to do what the most important non-European Powers did when they entered the expanding comity of nations first created by the European powers, for instance, Turkey, China, or Japan. Each of them acted in the light of its national interest and *raison d'état*, and treated the European Powers as equals. They did not think that they had any special obligation to an Asian nation because it was Asian or even subject to European rule.

Japan concluded an alliance with Britain and, renewing it in 1905, even agreed to send a Japanese army to the north-west frontier of India to defend it in the British interest. In 1922 Turkey had serious grievances against both Britain and France, and especially against Lloyd George for his pro-Greek attitude. But Mustapha Kemal showed no continuing

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resentment, and even rejected the support of the Indian Muslims who had agitated in favour of Turkey. He cut the ground from under their feet by rejecting pan-Islamism and abolishing the Caliphate, to both of which they had looked in order to defend their Muslim identity. Thereby Kemal also inflicted an irreparable injury on India, because, deprived of the confidence given to them by the existence of an extra-territorial Islamic order, the Indian Muslims fell back on territorial nationalism and the idea of creating a homeland, carving it out of India. Their leaders realised this, although everyone (including perhaps themselves) had thought it impossible, even until 1946. For this, Iqbal and Jinnah may be likened to Herzl and Weizmann. Yet the Hindus idolised Kemal, because for a short while he had stoked up their hatred of Britain.

In stark contrast to the Turks and the Japanese, India rushed to the equatorial regions as soon as she got her independence, and sought allies, or rather *federati*, among the Papuans, Malays, Indonesians, and Dark Africans. She might also have courted the Negritos of the Andamans as her auxiliaries if they had not already been under her rule. In 1955 she even crossed the Equator and gave formal status to an anti-imperialist (i.e., anti-European) league at 6°54′ south latitude. Seeing all that, I, not very unreasonably, recalled my father's parable.

YOU WILL NOT REALISE how unnatural it was for India to do this unless I tell you something about the attitudes and outlooks which had become ingrained in the Hindus over nearly 3,000 years, to become elements of the *mos maiorum* of their existence in India, and to control their relations with all non-Hindus.

In the very first place, this *Drang nach Südan*, that is, tropical projection, of Indian foreign policy went against the immemorial geographical orientation of the Hindu mind. Like the Muslims, the Hindus too had their *Kibla*, but not towards Mecca, nor for prayer only. It oriented all their ideals and feelings. The Hindu mind was permanently oriented towards the north like the mariner's compass, although their country was open to the south and closed on the north. Thus they placed their gods, beatitude, their holy places, in the northern mountains, and through the centuries the Hindus have marched barefoot to those inaccessible, snow-covered regions in order to ensure their salvation. This northward inclination made a great and fierce Hindu nationalist, who was also a scholar in his way, place the original home of the Aryans in the Arctic, brushing aside the fanatical vegetarianism of modern Hindus, for in that region the proto-Hindus could live only on the seal's flesh, blubber, and blood.

The explanation for all this is simple, though. The "Nordicism" of the Hindus, if I might coin such a word, was due to their being the first European colonists in India. As such, they could never shake off the associations of their original home, although its memory was totally lost. But nostalgia for their forgotten home made them worship the sun, light, and fire in India, a hot country. It also made them worship the rivers of India, because these took the place in their heart once occupied by those of their old habitat—namely, the Danube, Vistula, Dnieper, and Volga. On the burning, dusty, and embrowned plains of India they recalled the snows of that old world as something divine. Thus the greatest poet of ancient India described the perpetual snows of the Himalayas as the laughter of the god Siva, piled up from day to day.

As the northerners they were, the Hindus, like all Europeans, regarded the southern lands only as spaces for imperial expansion. One notable feature of modern Indian nationalism was incessant bragging about the civilising mission of the Hindus in South-east Asia. When I was young, a Bengali scholar thrilled us by publishing a book on the maritime colonial enterprise of the Hindus. But Sylvain Lévi, in his notice of it in the *Revue Critique*, called it *un livre de patriotisme*. Two of my teachers of history wrote books on Hindu colonial empires, and one of them, being a doctor of the Sorbonne, founded a society in imitation of the *Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient*, but characteristically called it the "Greater India Society."

As to Africa, the Hindu nationalists said that the sources of the Nile were first discovered by ancient Hindus, and one of them published a book to prove that the Maya civilisation was the work of Hindu colonists—and to this book Jawaharlal Nehru himself contributed a foreword. The boastfulness about Hindu colonialism was retrospective chauvinism, because any active colonial enterprise of the Hindus had come to an end long ago. After that there was even a rigorous taboo on crossing the seas for all Hindus, who lost caste if they did so.

The geographical revulsion of the Hindus from the southern lands was, however, subconscious. There was a stronger dislike for them and their inhabitants on the conscious plane, which was created by the megalomania, xenophobia, and colour prejudice of the Hindus. In its origin, the Hindu sense of racial superiority was exactly like that of all European Whites in regard to their subjects in the tropics. But gradually it developed into an egregious megalomania, with contempt for all non-Hindus, White or Black, as its complement. That was put on record around 1000 AD by the great Islamic scholar Alberuni. "The Hindus", he wrote, "believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs." The Muslim conquest intensified the megalomania as a prop for self-respect.

It ascended many degrees higher under British rule. At the beginning of the 19th century, the Abbé Dubois wrote that the Hindus respected British rule but despised the rulers. We even drew on Darwinism to boost the megalomania; and, as a boy, I even said that we were civilised when the English people were jumping from tree to tree. We also said that anybody could be a Christian or Muslim, but as for a Hindu, he could only be born as the result of the merits of a hundred births. The recovery of political independence was not likely to make any difference to this sense of superiority. Every European diplomat, publicist, or journalist who meets a high Indian official today comes out with the impression that he has been in the presence of an embodiment of Hindu majesty.

Naturally, meeting Europeans socially was tabooed for-

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merly. When Edward VII visited Calcutta as Prince of Wales in 1875 and wished to see a Bengali home, no Bengali of the city would receive him, and the Bengali government advocate who did was abused as a toady. In addition, there was the Hindu dislike for the dark complexion. An Indian girl from Natal who came to India to look for her roots said to me that she had not seen more colour prejudice even in Pietermaritzburg. Yet she was very pretty in her features.

In the light of all these attitudes and feelings which, accumulating through the ages, had become a fossilised complex of outlooks and behaviour, Indian foreign policy appears to be a bizarre exhibition of self-contradiction. The obvious way of getting round it would be to say that Jawaharlal Nehru was the framer of the policy and he was not tied down by Hindu inhibitions. Certainly, he did not affect any respect for Hindu traditions, and was even against them. So far as he was anything Indian, he was in a quarter of his personality an Indian Muslim, and for the rest he was an Englishman. In an article published on 15 September 1939, Mahatma Gandhi said of him: "He is a friend of the English people. Indeed, he is more English than Indian in his thought and make-up. He is more at home with Englishmen than with his countrymen. . . ."

But that very fact should have stood in the way of his foreign policy, because he had acquired the class-consciousness of the upper English order, as well as its aversion to foreigners. I can testify to that from personal experience. For some years I saw him off and on, and when I met him I never called him "Panditji" nor said "*Namasté*." I addressed him as Mr Nehru and spoke English with an approximation to his accent, and he was perfectly unassuming, unassertive, and natural with me. But in my presence one day he scolded two Bengali young men because they had cringed, called him "Panditji", and spoken English with a Bengali accent. I heard that he even kicked at those who wanted to touch his feet in Hindu obeisance.

And I saw his reaction to innocent Hindu curiosity. When he was working in the room assigned to him by his host Sarat Chandra Bose, one Hindu raised the curtain of the door and peeped in. Nehru jumped up from his chair, caught hold of the intruder by the scruff of the neck, and turned him out of the house. Yet the man who could not tolerate the most innocent Hindu invasion of privacy took India into the company of peoples whom he must have regarded as savages.

Besides, however English he might be personally, Nehru as a leader of the nationalist movement could not disregard Hindu susceptibilities. Actually, he had to submit to them. Thus, quite deliberately, he made two great sacrifices of his convictions and habits to Hinduism. The first of these was the submission to Mahatma Gandhi, with whom he did not have one idea, one feeling, or one aspect of behaviour in common. He became Gandhi's follower because he was convinced that the nationalist movement could not do without him. None the less, he confessed that it was not easy for him to work with his chosen leader. As he wrote on one occasion: "Even for me this was difficult in spite of my long and close contact with him."

His second sacrifice to Hinduism was to abandon the *sherwani* and *pajama*, the traditional costume of his family, and adopt the *dhoti*. From 1921 to 1940 I always saw him in the *dhoti* either in pictures or with my own eyes. I must explain why this was obligatory to him. In ancient times no Hindu could wear sewn garments in any circumstances. When the Muslims ruled India, those Hindus who worked for them had to wear the Islamic costume, but this was permitted for public roles alone. At home the *dhoti* remained obligatory. This compromise continued in the days of British rule. Even up to 1940, I saw that in orthodox Hindu homes in Calcutta the master's European clothes were kept in a dressing-room adjacent to the lounge in the outer apartments. When he went into the *zenana*, where the women and the household deities were, he had not only to change into the *dhoti* but also to sprinkle himself with Ganges water to purify himself. Even so, some Hindu wives would consider themselves polluted if they came into physical contact with a husband who wore Muslim clothes at all. Of this, I can give an authentic instance. The grandfather of the great poet Rabindranath Tagore, who was called Prince Dwarkanath for his grand style of living (when in Paris he entertained King Louis-Philippe in his hotel), habitually sported the Islamic costume, and in its most gorgeous form. So his very orthodox and devout wife sent for a Brahmin priest every morning to go through an expiatory ritual for having slept with such a husband.

It was not enough for a Hindu to *be* in the *dhoti*; he had to wear it with three tucks, so that he could be distinguished in ancient times from a non-Aryan aboriginal and, in later centuries, from a Muslim. Two of the tucks were obligatory in all circumstances, and the third for rituals and devotions. I always saw Nehru with all three tucks. Without the first two he could not be the leader of Hindu nationalism; and, as his relationship with Gandhi was quasi-religious, he also had the third. But as soon as India was rid of the British, Nehru gave up Gandhism, and with that the *dhoti*, to go back to his ancestral *sherwani* and *pajama*.

Thus, both as an Englishman in his personal capacity, and as the disciple of Gandhi in his political role, Nehru should have been repelled by the peoples of the south. But he was not, in the execution of his foreign policy. This needed a passion capable of cancelling all his natural and acquired inhibitions. That passion he had; it was his hatred of British rule, and it made him a schizophrenic. No Indian nationalist was more civilised and equable in his manners, and Nehru never lost that in dealing with the factional quarrels of nationalist politics, even when he himself was abused. Thus, he wrote to a reproachful colleague: "Your letter hardly refers to any question of policy or programme. It deals with personal issues and brings serious charges against particular individuals. This brings the argument to a lower level and it is obvious that if such opinions are held by any individual or group against another, mutual cooperation becomes impossible. . . ."

Yet the same man became a raving maniac as soon as the British connection was mentioned. His anger blazed forth, and that was a combination of the hatred of the parental

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order of a Roger Casement with the rage against his White ruler of a Hindu like V. D. Savarkar. It made him grossly unjust to those practically-minded Indian politicians who wanted a compromise with the British, even to so universally respected a man as Srinivasa Sastri, the founder of the Indian Liberal Federation.

The hatred made him totally incapable of seeing any political situation, national or international, for what it was. For instance, after visiting Spain during the Civil War of 1936-39, he told the Marquis of Zetland (the Secretary of State for India at the time, whom he saw in London on his way back to India) that there was very little popular backing for Franco in Spain, and that the Civil War was instigated by outside powers, and especially Britain, with France as her tool. In despair, Zetland wrote to Lord Linlithgow: "He clearly takes a biased view of the political situation in Europe and I do not think that any amount of reasoning would cause him to change his views. . . ."

It was this hatred which gave to Nehru the extremism he showed at every crucial juncture of Indo-British relations, and made the attainment of independence by India in 1947 a repetition of the story of the Sibylline Books, that is, an acceptance of the lowest gain in a series of transactions with diminishing returns. I should explain that from 1937 to 1947 Mahatma Gandhi had no effective voice in the political decisions of the Congress and only gave his formal approval. It was Nehru who had the most powerful voice in determining policy, with Patel, Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, and Pant as some sort of brake. They rushed in to pull the chestnuts out of the fire before they were charred. They succeeded only in 1937, in respect of accepting office in the provinces; and in 1947, in accepting partition. In all other situations, Nehru won. In 1939 Gandhi wished to cooperate with Britain in the War, but was almost contemptuously brushed aside by Nehru. It was Nehru again who was responsible for the failure of the Stafford Cripps Mission as well as of the Cabinet Mission.

The others dared not oppose him because they knew that Nehru voiced not only his own hatred but also the hatred of the Indian people, who, whatever the immediate practical advantages, would approve of no other solution of the Indo-British problem except a total winding up of British rule. This remained a mandate from 1920 to 1946, not the less coercive because it was never formally given, and compelled the Congress leaders to be uniformly intransigent. Seeing this, in 1941, I wrote an article to which I gave the title "The Congress in Chains." By that I meant that the Congress leaders had no freedom to consider any British proposal on its merits.

I NOW HAVE TO DESCRIBE the character of the popular hatred of British rule. It is a mistake to think that it came into existence or even reached its greatest intensity in the course of the active nationalist agitation from 1905 onwards. On the contrary, it appeared with the very establishment of British rule. At the end of the 18th century a Frenchman who had embraced Islam and lived in Bengal for a long time wrote about this. "The Indians", he said, "have been a more dangerous nation than they seem to be now. They may be in slumber, but they may awake, and they deserve to have a more watchful eye than the English Government seems to think." This hatred increased during the 19th century, when under British administration the Indian middle class attained to unprecedented prosperity. At the turn of the century the British officials in India felt, even before any active agitation against British rule was launched, that they were living on the rim of a volcano. One of the greatest of modern Indians, Swami Vivekananda, wrote about the hatred in horrifying words in a book published in 1901. I translate the passage from the original Bengali:

> "Intoxicated by the new wine of their power; devoid of all sense of good and evil; terrible like fierce beasts of prey; subject to women because maddened by lust; drenched from head to foot in alcohol; without cleanness of behaviour or cleanness of body; materialistic in outlook and dependent on matter for action; robbers of other peoples' countries and wealth by brute force, deceit, and trickery; disbelievers in the other world, theorists of mere corporeality, given to pampering the flesh—such is the Western demon in the eyes of Indians."

Even though Swami Vivekananda was an ardent nationalist, he was saddened by this intemperate hatred and commented: "It is an external view. They do not see into the heart." But neither his humanity nor his moral sense prevailed. By 1920 the hatred drove out all that was positive in Indian nationalism. During the whole of the Gandhian era Indian nationalism was hatred of the British and not love of India.

But I must tell you at this point that the anti-British feeling among Indians was not only *matched* but *aggravated* by the anti-Indian feeling of the British community in India. It was stridently vocal from the 1860s to almost the end of British rule, and it was expressed with utter disregard of fairness, kindness, or even decency. That is why I am sickened by the professions of love for India from those British persons who had been there. I can fill a whole book with evidence to the contrary; but I am reluctant to give examples, because that would give deep pain to the British part of my readership. Still, I feel compelled to give one or two in order to remove disbelief. In 1899 an Englishman (who was once a Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, but had turned journalist) published a book on India after a short visit during which he was briefed by the local British, both officials and others. This book contained the most disgusting exhibition of hatred towards us, and I quote only one example.

> "By his legs [this Englishman wrote] you shall know the Bengali. The leg of a free man is straight or a little bandy, so that he can stand on it solidly: his calf is tapered and his thigh flat. The Bengali's leg is either skin and bone, the same size all the way down, with knocking knobs for knees, or else it is very fat and globular, also turning in at the knees, with round thighs like a woman's. The Bengali's leg is the leg of a slave."

The writer of this passage was, however, ready to make a concession to Indian nationalism.

> "Let the disloyalty talk and write as it will; after all, why

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should a native of India be loyal to Britain? But the moment it begins to act, shoot and spare not."

This Englishman, had he lived to 1911, would have had the mortification of seeing the Bengalis, playing football with their slaves' legs and bare feet in addition, beat the Black Watch.

In 1913, the year in which a Bengali, writing in English, won the Nobel Prize for Literature, Rudyard Kipling wrote: "Well, whose fault is it that the Babu is what he is. . . . We have worked without intermission to make this Caliban." I am one of them.

Again, when Katherine Mayo went to India to gather material for her notorious book, the Chief Information Officer of the Government of India, an Englishman with an Oxford degree, told her that the greatest obstacle to extending self-government to Indians was their precocious sexual indulgence and their homosexuality, adding that Hindu fathers practised pederasty on their young sons. *The Saturday Review*, in its review of the book, said: "The basic fact is that India is not socially fit for self-government. And the social evils are found in their worst form among precisely those who will be given political power." The same kind of Briton is now saying about the same kind of Indian that they are running the greatest democracy in the world. If, after that, you expect me to have any respect for any prevalent opinion you would be assuming more naivety in me than I possess.

IT WAS A CASE of the deep calling to the deep. Our great men were perfectly aware of the two-sidedness of the hatred. In 1873, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, the creator of the new Hindu nationalism, wrote in an article in Bengali: "We might take up any newspaper edited by an Englishman, and be sure to find in it some abuse of the natives of the country and some unfair criticism. Again, if we pick up a Bengali newspaper, we shall find in it expressions of hatred for the English and denigration of them. . . . This has been going on for a long time. There is nothing new in it." But our best men would have nothing to do with hatred, from whichever side it came. Two of the greatest of them, Rammohun Roy and Bankim Chandra Chatterji, were physically assaulted by English officials, but that did not prevent their saying that British rule had saved India from many evils. One might sum up the contest in hatred by saying that the British form was more vile, and the Indian more lethal.

THAT IS THE AETIOLOGY of the foreign policy of India. It is the extension to India's external relations of a particular form of Indian nationalism, and of the form which was dominant in the Gandhian era. This was bound to be the case. Such an accumulation of hatred could not disappear overnight; no political hatred does. Hatred for the Muslim was born in the Hindu around 1000 AD, i.e., two hundred years before the Muslim conquest; it is still alive. Concession of independence to Ireland has not removed the Irishman's hatred; emancipation of the Negroes has not done away with the hatred between Blacks and Whites in the United States; no question of practical policy is softening the hatred between the Jew and the Arab. So why should Indian hatred for Britain come to an end with the end of British rule? Here we have fresh proof that

> *The evil that men do lives after them,*
> *The good is oft interred with their bones.*

I could foresee, even before Independence came, that it would not usher in an era of Indo-British friendship. In an article written in November 1946 and published in England several months later, I said:

> "The effort—to establish Indo-British friendship—will have to begin, not only from scratch, but from the mathematical quantity of minus something; the warmth will have to be raised from a level of frost considerably below the freezing point. What warmth aged David will derive from his new Abishag lies in the womb of futurity, and the future, as old Machiavelli—a Leftist in his time—said, produces indifferently either good or evil."

That was what I published in January 1947; the future has now revealed itself. Anti-British feeling has acquired a new and more undesirable character, because what was formerly only the hatred of British rule has become hatred for Britain as such.

In 1959, I published a book on the experiences of my first visit to England.[1] It contained no political views, but breathed my happiness at seeing with my own eyes the civilisation which had existed only in my imagination. Yet of all my books this was the one which got the most scurrilous abuse from my countrymen. Reviewing it in the most widely circulating Indian newspaper, one of the country's foremost journalists described me as a dog wagging its tail at the feet of its master. No Indian was to be forgiven for praising England.

I SHALL NOT OFFER an analysis of the motive force behind Indian foreign policy; I assume that the reader will correlate its major features with their causes. What remains to be understood is its integration into the whole East-West conflict as it is today. The conflict is no longer the anti-imperialistic movement it was meant to be in the late 1940s and early '50s, which was anachronistic even then. It had to be kept alive by being transformed into something more suited to the times—a movement of counter-imperialism.

Some time ago, I wrote an article about the Indian contribution to counter-imperialism, and the influential *Times of India* took it seriously enough to publish it. "ARE WE COLONIZING BRITAIN?" was the heading given to the piece, and in order to tempt its readers the paper printed a sentence from it in bold letters at the top. It ran: "All Indians in Britain live in the apocalyptic hope of seeing the day on

[1] Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *A Passage to England* (Macmillan, 1959).

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which Britain will be regarded as the brightest jewel in the crown of India."

Of course, that was *façon de parler*, but not more so than the court jester's clowning over his wisdom. If the reader is sceptical, I would offer one cue to counter-imperialism. All the peoples of the Third World have taken over the English imperialist ballad which they formerly bitterly resented and loftily ridiculed. They themselves are now singing it, in a chorus more exultant than that of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony:

Take up the White Man's burden—
No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper—
The tale of common things.

Take up the White Man's burden—
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better
The hate of those ye guard.

I shall leave the conflict at that, and face the question bound to be raised if my thesis is accepted, even only for the sake of argument. How and when will it end; will it come to an end at all? The answer is: "Never."

It will not come to an end because the Third World will never be able to bring it to a head for want of military power; and it will waste what arms the Western countries are giving to it from their own technological hubris, in pursuing its internecine hatreds, and that, too, will feed the hatred against the West. And the West, on its part, will not have the will to tackle the East's hatred. The East-West conflict will remain a festering international sore, of which the least putrid spots are already to be seen in a divided United Nation and a divided Commonwealth.

THE WEAKNESS OF THE WEST lies in its being torn by its own feuds and hatreds, both domestic and intra-European, which have made it a house divided. I sensed this just after the War, and wrote about its emergence in Britain in my article entitled "*Stasis* in England" (one meaning of *stasis* is civil strife). I argued that the traditional English party system was transforming itself into a class conflict, and this, I explained, was due to the character of the Labour Party:

> "We make the discovery that most of the extremists in the party, the so-called doctrinaire Socialists, are the maladjusted scions of the ruling class. . . . They are all rebels against the family tradition, which means the same thing as the Nomos of the community. . . . The same aversion to the parental association is impelling British leftists to make common cause with everybody who wants to injure and humiliate Great Britain. Whether it be a white, yellow, brown, or black enemy of Great Britain, for every one of these the British Leftist seems to have a fellow-feeling which he does not have for the parental clan. For everybody but his own folk he gives the call: 'We be of one blood, ye and I.'"

That was in 1946, but I find today that my anticipation was nothing more than sniffing the smoke before the whole house caught fire. The class conflict has become a conflict of sovereign states. On 25 January 1985, a miners' leader asked Mrs Thatcher whether she would enter into negotiations with a foreign power if it imposed conditions such as she expected the National Union of Mineworkers to accept. Furthermore, the conflict has become universal, between sex and sex, age and age, father and son, mother and daughter, and so on. It is also showing itself in ways which are not less significant because they are so odd. Do not imagine for a moment that love of humanity has anything to do with the demonstrations against Cruise. The missile has not yet killed one living creature; the motor car has been killing thousands of human beings for decades, but that killer does not evoke class hatred. The hatred is even influencing physiological thinking. I have yet to meet one young English vegetarian-from-conviction who does not hate Mrs Thatcher. It has advanced further and is now trying to put an end to the symbiosis of animals in nature. A fanatical group is waging a class war on behalf of weasels, stoats and ferrets, which they themselves refuse to fight. Yet even I, a Bengali Babu, was made to dislike these animals by an English book. Only class hatred could make Englishmen so un-English.

THE SIMPLE TRUTH is that the Europeans have become the most committed theorists and practitioners of political hatred, and are even exporting it to non-Europeans. All the European political doctrines and practices as they are today, whether Communism, democracy, or nationalism, have hatred as their main, if not only, driving force. This validates the East's hatred, besides weakening the West's position.

Do not assume from this that I do not recognise the proper function of hatred in human life. On the contrary, I accept it as a natural human faculty, as natural as is the sexual urge or hunger. I accept its moral necessity as well. Hatred in our mental functioning is equivalent to adrenalin in physiological functioning: just as that secretion gives a man the strength to cope with danger to his life, hatred gives him the extra energy to combat moral evil. But man has perverted every one of his natural urges for the sake of unrestrained self-indulgence. So political hatred is now what the sexual urge would be if it led only to satyriasis and nymphomania.

But there is something even worse, and that is impotent hatred. The fierce hatreds of today are incapable of harming any of their objects. That is even more harmful than mere hatred. Mrs Shirley Williams said on 27 January 1985 that Britain would pass into the Third World with the exhaustion of North Sea oil. How imperceptive she was! Being in the Third World is not being poor, but being in the state of mind engendered by impotent hatred. I have seen it all my life in India.

This is what has to be fought, but there is neither strength nor disposition for it among those who should fight, namely, the clerics and the intellectuals. Many of the clerics, including some princes of the Church, have actually passed into the camp of hatred in spite of their traditional Erastianism. The others merely repeat the stale incantation: "On earth peace,

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good will toward men", not knowing that the tag is no longer accepted as a correct reading of *Luke* 2.14. If the clergymen want a biblical text, they should recite the following:

> *Sunt spiritus qui ad vindictam creati sunt,*
> *Et in furore suo confirmaverunt tormenta sua.*

Some spirits there be who are created for vengeance and in their fury lay on sore strokes.

The intellectuals, for their part, have by a majority embraced hatred. All that can be said in mitigation of their position is that there are benign haters among them as well as malignant haters. I recognise the Laodicean hater when, on entering an English home, I see *The Guardian* on the table. But he is as was the Menshevik to the Bolshevik or the Girondin to the Montagnard. In 1927 Julien Benda closed his book on the *trahison des clercs* with the remark: "History will smile as she ponders that Socrates and Jesus Christ died for this species." What would he have said today? The fight against futile hatred goes by default, and if I ask my readers to take it up, I do so without apology, for if politics, being basically amoral, comes within the scope of science, having acquired a moral dimension, it also falls within the ambit of ethics.

AUTHORS

William Bedford lives in the Humberside fishing port of Grimsby, where he was born in 1943. He has taught English at the University of Sheffield, Middlesex Polytechnic, and the Open University, and his essays, poems, and stories have appeared in the *Critical Quarterly*, *Essays in Criticism*, *London Magazine*, and *The Nation*.

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George Urban, the editor and co-author of *Détente* (1976), *Eurocommunism* (1978) and *Stalinism* (1982), all published by Maurice Temple Smith, is currently the Director of Radio Free Europe. Among his recent contributions to ENCOUNTER are interviews with Max Kampelman (February and March 1985), Alexander Zinoviev (April 1984), and Jeane Kirkpatrick (November 1983). Extracts from his analysis of Andras Hegedus's auto-biographical confessions hae appeared in *The Times* (London) Mr Urban writes to us from Munich: "That Mr Hegedus lives in Hungary and his story is being told in daily instalments by Radio Free Europe makes the inspiration of his confession doubly intriguing. . . ."

Peter Porter's most recent book of poems is *Fast Forward*, published in 1984 by Oxford University Press.

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Jean-François Revel writes a column for the Paris journal *Le Point*; a collection of his pieces, *Le Rejet de l'état*, was published this Spring by Grasset. His most recently translated work, *How Democracies Perish*, was published earlier this year by Doubleday (New York) and Weidenfeld (London).

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Dolf Sternberger was for many years Professor of Political Philosophy at Heidelberg University. He is the author of numerous books of political and cultural criticism, including *The Panorama of the 19th Century*, published in translation by Blackwell in 1978. His major work is a still untranslated two-volume study of "the roots of politics", *Drei Wurzeln der Politik*. He contributed a study of Karl Jaspers to the December 1983 issue of ENCOUNTER.

Peter Collier and **David Horowitz**'s article first appeared in the *Washington Post Magazine* (17 March 1985).

David Aberbach is the author of *At The Handles of the Lock*, a study of the fiction of S. I. Bialik (Oxford University Press, 1984). His contributions to ENCOUNTER include "On Rereading Bialik" (June 1981) and "Charlie Chaplin" (May 1983).

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George Urban

"The People Are Coming!"

A Remarkable Political Confession

ANDRAS HEGEDUS, Prime Minister of Communist Hungary at the time of the outbreak of the 1956 Revolution, has now given us a compelling psycho-history of the life of the Communist party-functionary—for that, he tells us, was his real position in the Communist hierarchy. It is, he says, the real position of any Communist Prime Minister in any Communist country.

Mr Hegedus's confessions[1] are unique in that he looks back upon the deeds and misdeeds of the time of Stalin, including his own, from two different points of observation. He sees them, on the one hand, with the eyes of a now vaguely social-democratic student of history whose catharsis began soon after the suppression of the uprising and has yet to run its course. That is "Hegedus Mark II"; the enlightened, rational, broad-minded, even sweet-tempered sociologist of the 1980s, ready to concede a point and indulge in a good deal of self-mockery. But he also sees them with the eyes of the former Stalinist, whose actions and judgments he would like to see weighed in the light of the whole ideological and social milieu into which history and his own temper had propelled him. "Hegedus Mark I" wants to be understood, not excused.

A sense of guilt weighs heavily upon Mr Hegedus's mind in both contexts. It runs through his revelations with the force of some unpaid debt to history and the Hungarian people. But it is, perversely, a sense of guilt private to the world of those great political sinners who, having done wrong, would still not be judged by the yardstick of "ordinary" justice. "Hegedus Mark II" is incredulous about the follies of his earlier incarnation. He finds, with Dr Johnson, the re membrance of a crime committed in vain to be one of the most painful of reflections:

> ". . . a consciousness of guilt was present in our minds, but we never spoke about it. Again and again we suppressed it, and found ideological arguments for justifying what we were doing.
>
> Personally, I suffered unambiguously from a sense of guilt. I felt that if a change were to occur, it would be absolutely right for a People's Court to call me to account. I thought I would, together with Gero [Erno Gero, Communist Party chief, deposed in the Budapest uprising] accept the death penalty because I had done what I had done—and this is what is so frightening—for an idea that was sooner or later bound to triumph. Even in later years, 'guilt' presented itself to my mind in this august wrapping."

Hegedus, like Milovan Djilas, was a born radical, an *enfant terrible* whose hatred of the established order could have driven him—as it nearly did—in the opposite political direction. Might he have chosen to go along with the Hungarian Fascist Right rather than the Communist Left? Zoltan Zsille, his sharp and erudite interlocutor, asks him about the "existential" decision:

> "I was a rather solitary schoolboy. I could not easily relax or make contact with others. This is perhaps why I developed a hatred for the upper classes. I have often asked myself since: could this have led me to anti-Semitism? To this day I do not know the answer to that question. It was probably a Jewish schoolmate who saved me from allowing my hatred of the gentry to degenerate into a hatred of Jews. . . .
>
> One night Father Mikulas came to see me with a newspaper advert in his hand. It said that the Bolyai College of the Turul Association was inviting applications from prospective university students with the right peasant background. . . . The application had to be accompanied by the birth certificate of all four grandparents. This was to make sure that the applicants were not Jews and that they came from the Hungarian ethnic community. I sent in the birth certificates of my four grandparents and was accepted without trouble."

It was from this initially Right-wing background that Andras Hegedus's Communist radicalism eventually developed. Seldom has the common psychological source of "Left-Fascism" and "Right-Fascism" been more persuasively

[1] *Elet egy eszme arnyekaban* (*Life in the Shadow of an Idea*). By ANDRAS HEGEDUS. An autobiographical interview with ZOLTAN ZSILLE. Zoltan Zsille (Vienna), 200 Aus. Sch.

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depicted. The road Mussolini travelled from the Left to the Right, and the one Hegedus and his like travelled from a flirtation with the Right to Stalinism ended in the common thuggery of concentration camps and Gulags.

It is not that Hegedus was unaware of the road he might have to travel as a functionary of the Communist Party. He had received his first impressions of the Party in action from stories doing the rounds in his native village in the west of Hungary, where during the 1919 Soviet Republic Tibor Szamuely's perambulating "courts martial" had ordered some public hangings. "Fear of the dictatorship of the proletariat" was, Hegedus tells us, an underlying anxiety of his family.

> "At Csorna, some nine kilometres from us, nine peasants were spectacularly strung up. It was the work of the Szamuely group, who had come down to 'sort things out.' Some people had begun to 'get organised' in the village. The participants were hanged from the trees in the market-place with great cruelty as a public spectacle. The story was alive in my young mind as a source of fear . . . it was my first picture of Communism which I nursed carefully in my childhood."

Yet when the call came, the young Hegedus could not resist the lure of chastising the class enemy "with whips", because he was idle, "full of passionate intensity", and had heard something about a doctrine that would give him the whip and the self-righteousness to wield it. Mr Hegedus is remarkably frank about the sources of his conversion:

> ". . . For all these reasons, the opportunity to do illegal Party work struck me, in April 1944, as a slice of bread would strike a man on the brink of starvation. From then on, I knew what to do. . . .
>
> My situation was rather like that of a young Palestinian today. You have a young fellow of 20—with intellectual pretensions, to boot—not knowing what to do with himself, sitting and waiting in a PLO refugee camp. Then suddenly along comes somebody to tell him: 'You have a job to do', handing him a weapon to do it with so that he has licence to kill and to murder. Well, your young man will seize the opportunity.
>
> Personally, I was not handed a gun in 1944—that too was to happen a bit later—but I *was* given a job to do."

HEGEDUS'S SIGNAL CONTRIBUTION is his disclosure of the grave unease with which even highly dedicated leaders of the Communist takeover pursued their objectives. If we can believe what he now tells us, he willed the ends without willing the means—a weakness of often life-saving merit in a totalitarian system. While Secretary of the Communist Youth Association in 1945, Hegedus was invited to send members of his movement to the execution of two Hungarian Nazis and to watch the executions himself.

> HEGEDUS: I didn't doubt that the verdicts were justified, but I was taken aback by the thought of having to watch an execution myself. And I was even more frightened by the

Does Stalin Still Live?

Warsaw

STALIN IS DEAD, *but there again, perhaps he isn't.*

The Soviet bloc has been busily resuscitating the old Georgian tyrant, dressing him up in the generalissimo's uniform and hailing the chief. There he is (soft-spoken, wise as Diogenes) in the Soviet-East German film *Victory*, in the Polish play *Yalta* (wise, outwitting perfidious Albion), and the Polish film *Catastrophe in Gibraltar* (wise, pock-marked and absolutely correct). In Eastern Europe they are said to have cried when he died; then they spat on his memory; and now stage and screen celebrate a great war leader.

THANK GOODNESS, *one thinks at such a time, for underground culture. A remarkable documentary volume, printed on Poland's clandestine presses, presents an alternative vision of the Soviet leader—Stalin as political circus master, Stalin as clown. The book, entitled "They", is a series of interviews with the ageing politicians who established Communism in Poland after the War. Some of them were feared, others despised. In the end they became politically invisible.*

The author, Teresa Toranska, tracked them down—Edward Ochab, briefly party chief, Roman Werfl, a party ideologist, Stefan Staszewski, Warsaw party boss, Wiktor Klosiewicz, a central committee member, Leon Chajn, a deputy justice minister, the widow of Hilary Minc, once the third most important man in the Polish leadership, and the dreaded Jakub Berman. They all revealed some home truths about the establishment of Communist rule, and above all about their complete subjugation to the will of Stalin.

MOST OF *Stalin's men have clung to their socialism, or at least to a vague belief in power. Berman among other things controlled the secret police in its postwar heyday. Berman, who died last year shortly after giving the interview, had this exchange with the author about how the 1947 referendum was rigged.*

When asked why he did not reveal the truth at the time, Berman replied:

> **"You cannot reveal the truth if you wish to stay in power. If we had an alternative—to win and stay or to lose and give up power—then we could have told the truth. But we had no choice. . . . Even now we must not hold free elections. Now more than then, because we will lose. I have no doubt about that. Unless we want to become extremely gentlemanlike, lift our hats, bow and say: here you are, we want to retire, take power yourselves."**

"Exactly", responded the author.

"What, exactly? Why are you saying 'exactly'?" Berman shouted.

"Because", the author replied, "that is what you should do."

Roger Boyes
in THE TIMES (*London*)

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prospect of seeing my still fledgling organisation of university youth exposed to the demented fury of the mob.

ZSILLE: Would you agree that this reaction of yours gives us a true picture of the attitude many Communist leaders tended to adopt both then and later—"Hanging? Yes, but *I* don't want to be there?"

HEGEDUS: Unfortunately, this was so. My life up to 1953 was characterised by that attitude. I didn't doubt the justification of the illegalities. At the same time, however, I tried to put distance between myself and the dirty work perpetrated by the *AVH* [the Hungarian security police] and, before its time, the Political Police.

This duality runs through the entire political life of Andras Hegedus. He was, as he tells us in a variety of phrases, captivated by "the enchantment of power", too weak to abandon the "pleasurable obsession with power." Facing a cheering crowd from the Prime Minister's platform, he was aware that the applause concealed hatred—"but this feeling was suppressed in my mind by the magic sensation of power."

At the same time, Hegedus lived in fear—the fear of what Moscow might do to him if he failed to toe the line, and the fear of retribution if he did. With prison and the hangman's noose never far out of sight, the first proved stronger. This kept him in line. But when, following Rakosi's dismissal (in July 1956), the visiting Mikoyan offered him the post of Hungarian Party First Secretary, Hegedus declined. He was only 32 when he was made Prime Minister. He loved the job while fearing its consequences. But the First Secretaryship would have required a "ruthlessness and militancy I did not possess." Under Stalin no such refusal would have been tolerated. But with the despot gone, Hegedus ducked the highest prize—and the greatest danger.

"FEAR" AND "FEAR" AGAIN—then "fear and shame"—are the words that haunt us in the memoirs of this once powerful *apparatchik*. It was fear prompted, surprisingly, by conscience. For whatever Leninism might have dinned into him about the relativity, indeed the nullity, of moral values, Hegedus's elemental sense of right and wrong never completely deserted him.

His wrongdoings were suffused by an awareness of the betrayal he was helping to enact. His nemesis sprang from cowardice, not hubris. Andras Hegedus was also lucky. Under a different political constellation, he and his fellow Stalinist leaders might have had to face a court sterner than the court of history which Hegedus now invites to utter its opinion, if not judgment, on his career. He is contrite; but he seeks explanations, not forgiveness.

To the West, shame and contrition coming from a leading Stalinist carry an unusual message. For a society in which the sophisticated chic is to deny the existence of either, or to mock them where they survive, Hegedus's contrition suggests that a hardy morality can and does thrive under oppression. Could it even be that it thrives particularly well under oppression?

"I am ashamed . . . I was wrong", Hegedus tells us, ". . . and I must share responsibility for the fate of Hungary after 1945—above all, for having imposed a foreign system on the Hungarian nation."

Such self-critical sentiments are seldom articulated by politicians, least of all by the former leaders of totalitarian régimes whether of the Right or the Left—though the late Albert Speer comes to mind as another example. They put Hegedus closer to the moral universe of Solzhenitsyn than to that of Khrushchev. They give us a modicum of reason to believe that even where fanaticism and personal ambition mutually reinforce one another, as they so often do in the viziers of tyrannical régimes, the search for the "true" truth and "the right measure of things" is seldom entirely abandoned. That collective dark night of the mind which Lenin hoped for, and Orwell feared, has just not come about. It may yet do so. Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot are formidable reminders of the human potential for evil; but we seem to have been given a reprieve.

HEGEDUS'S CONTRIBUTION to our knowledge of the 1945-56 period is significant though slightly less striking. That he was technically responsible for calling in the Soviet forces to quell the Budapest uprising has long been suspected. Now we know that he was. But here again, it is his portrayal of the mentality of an unelected, unrepresentative and frightened cabal that fascinates more than his blow-by-blow account of what happened. His sketch of his reaction to the first whiff of revolution on 23 October 1956 is an *aperçu* of the rest of his recollections.

"I put down the receiver, got to my feet and looked out of the window: I could see that the head of the demonstration had reached the middle of the Margaret Bridge. As far as I could see from the Prime Minister's window there was absolutely nothing to suggest that it was beginning to tail off. I walked across to Party Headquarters. . . . It was a terrifying sight. Even if I had not seen it coming, I should then have realised that here was National Resistance developing against the Central Leadership and against the policies of the old leaders, including, of course, myself in a personal sense—a resistance which was quite simply sweeping us aside. I saw quite clearly—this is it, the people are coming!"

History was thus playing a dialectical trick on the Hungarian Communists. Was Hegedus aware of the irony of his situation? Was he reminded of Lenin's lapidary observation that successful revolutions occur only when popular discontent coincides with the collapse of self-confidence in the ruling classes? One wonders, for it was only well into the War that Hegedus, the young radical in search of an ideology, had "first encountered live Communists, and an avalanche of fresh information was put in my way about Marxism, Socialism and Communism. Up to that point I had virtually no knowledge of any of those things."

"*The people are coming!*" But Andras Hegedus, the peasant boy elevated to the office of Communist Prime Minister, found himself on the side of the ruling class. Four days later the revolution was triumphant, and Hegedus was flown to Moscow to save him from the fury of the people.

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Lenin would have marvelled.

The exceptional interest of Andras Hegedus's revelations lies in what he tells us about the inner mechanics of oppression and the mind of the oppressors.

It was not true under Stalin, and it is not true today, that the Soviet empire is shaped by a single centre of power articulating a clear political will. It is only that part of the truth that the public can see. In reality, Soviet leadership is to some extent conditioned by the local "correlation of forces" and especially the character of local Communists. In those halcyon days under Stalin most Communist leaders on the peripheries were ready—indeed they were zealous—to be led and deceived under the auspices of an ideology they did not always understand but nevertheless fervently embraced, because it enabled them to blow up a hated order, to punish their enemies, and to assert themselves in the name of the will of history. If slavery it was, it was sweet slavery with (as Hegedus reminds us) obsessional pleasures and enchantments.

The men (and the exceedingly few women) Hegedus talks about were not "politicians" in any accepted sense of the word but "party-functionaries"—a self-replenishing religious order with an unerring compass and self-imposed discipline. Faith told them what to do and the Party told them how to do it. The truth they believed they possessed was a badge of legitimacy and a password to great power.

> "One characteristic [of every party-functionary] was his faith in the superiority of the Party above all other things—the mystification of the Party. Orders coming from the Party were, therefore, seen to be received from a higher, mystical authority which *had* to be obeyed unconditionally. The nature of this higher authority was passing ordinary understanding. One could only believe in it; one could only believe in its omnipotence and superiority. In other words, our faith in the Party was a deep, subconscious commitment to which everything was subordinated. We lived in a state of ideology, religion, complete dedication."

That is why the leaders of the Soviet *glacis* in Central and Eastern Europe did not have to be "told" what to think and what to do. Matyas Rakosi, Jakub Berman, Anna Pauker and the other East European leaders were only too anxious to anticipate Moscow's wishes and to outbid them where convenient. And when the comrades in Moscow expressed dissatisfaction with their record, they soon fell into line, abandoning office and power with the humility of erring monks serving a higher cause and accepting the articulations of its appointed oracle. Rakosi was put in power and dismissed from power by the same occult authority. He accepted his fall as obediently as he had accepted his appointment. *Roma locuta*; there was no more to be said.

> "Our relationship with Moscow was such that whatever Moscow suggested we accepted. Not only because we *had* to accept it, and were threatened with dire consequences if we didn't, but because we saw clearly that the Soviet leadership was in charge of the entire Socialist bloc and the international Communist movement. . . . I regarded Moscow as the kind of political centre whose directives were obligatory. Those of our political leaders who had spent the war in Moscow spoke of Stalin only as 'the master'. . . ."

All the more remarkable, then, that Andras Hegedus eventually rid himself of the faith, the vows of obedience—and now, perhaps, of the burden of shame as well. The need to believe, the success of self-deception, and the nagging doubt that "none of this may, after all, be true!" are the psychological triad that make his book a unique document of our time. They demonstrate yet again that even despots, and the servants of despotism, like to retire at night with a clear conscience—and if the price of that conscience is the reversal of the entire context in which reason, decency, compassion and freedom have meaning, reverse it they will.

Andras Hegedus doubts whether his experiences are likely to be relevant to the future of Western Europe. The lure of Marxism-Leninism and the quest for totalitarian solutions are, he avers, dead there. It is, he thinks, in the Third World that the metaphor of his life and work as a Communist is more likely to serve as a warning, because it is in the Third World countries that the Utopia of Marxism-Leninism offers alluring solutions to backwardness and poverty. "I hope", he says, "that my experiences will not be lost on them."

Hegedus may be right about the Third World, but one doubts whether he is entirely right about the West. "The death of ideology" was proclaimed a trifle too soon. With religion enfeebled and most of our secular guide-posts shattered, the quest for ideology in one guise or another is once again the predominant quest of our time. There is no need to go to the Third World to see it alive and kicking. The "shame" that engulfs Mr Hegedus may yet have a very real meaning for us all.

For all his contrition and shame for the past, Andras Hegedus is far from being a liberal democrat. He condemns the monolithic Communist system in the USSR and Eastern Europe, but does not believe that parliamentary democracy could or should eventually replace them. He is, he tells us, a Euro-Communist in the context of Western Europe, but a radical though piecemeal reformer of the existing systems in the East. He stands for their pluralisation and "civilianisation", but beyond that he would not commit himself. When Zoltan Zsille asked him whether he would look upon the pluralisation of Communist society as his ideal objective or as a piece of an inevitable *real-politik* in the light of the restricting presence of Soviet power, Mr Hegedus evaded giving an answer.

It is, nevertheless, clear enough from what he says that he has a profound and continuing intellectual investment in the Communist world. He wants to see the system shorn of its excesses, humanised, and made accountable to representative interest groups; he now says he stands for the freedom of the press. But beyond that he would not go, and—more important—he believes the East European nations themselves would not go either. Here, in my view, he is in grave

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error, but he offers a serious argument that merits attention and study.

> "One has to understand the inner essence of these monolithic systems. It is no longer true that they are supported by a mere handful of people. When Kadar came to power in 1956 one could rightly say that 90-95% of the people were against him. We can no longer think in such extravagant terms. . . . A great many people have by now been compromised into collaborating with the existing power. A new stratum of society has come into being which has an interest in supporting the system. The members of this stratum may, it is true, withdraw into private life whenever there is a crisis, thus creating the impression that the system is unsupported. But this is not so. . . . I am convinced that even if the Soviet threat had not existed in Poland, a multi-party system would not have arisen there. Poland would have gone the way of Yugoslavia. Such would be the solution in all monolithic systems even in the absence of any Soviet threat. If Cuba were the next to move, there, too, the solution would be the same, even though the Soviets would have no way of threatening Cuba."

This comes close to underwriting a modified version of "the Brezhnev Doctrine", for it claims that the East European societies have been made to undergo so fundamental a change under "socialist rule" that any return to a liberal parliamentary dispensation has been rendered unimaginable. Once Communist, always Communist; Marxism rules, OK. It also comes close to Alexander Zinoviev's unsupported but intensely-held assertion that the Soviet system is *sui generis* and here to stay in perpetuity. Do we need proof where prophets abound?

HEGEDUS HAS COME a long way since his fanatical days as a Stalinist party functionary. It was a young man's intellectual confusion superimposed on a restless temper and a quest for *fiat justitia* that hoisted him into the Communist movement. It is much to be hoped that his gradual disenchantment with the traps of ideology and the corruptions of arbitrary power will now propel him one stage further on his road to a rational understanding of what human nature can and what it cannot be expected to digest and perform.

This is where Communists—even former Communists—have been on poor terms with the muse of history. Sooner or later Andras Hegedus will discover that, in an imperfect world, the institutionalisation of competing political parties, coupled with a strong independent executive, is our sole, though far from fireproof guarantee against tyranny. But that, I suspect, cannot as yet be stated in the Hungary where Hegedus continues to reside.

The return of a prodigal is forever fascinating. Andras Hegedus has put us in his debt; but this prodigal's truths reach us from a world of utopian faith that has few points of contact with our own. To return is fine; not to have erred would have been better. The price of Comrade Hegedus's youthful fanaticism is still being paid by his native Hungary.

Uncovering the Sky

It was a world
where adults crawled, humbled
by rafters, precariously along
beams, torch in hand
through a man-made cave
of otherworldly darkness.

Feet below, Mother sewed or tidied
vased flowers, a kitten was Sisyphus
to a ball of wool, a retriever
nosed its paws in sleep.

Up here
paradox and enchantment ruled,
the choreography of spiders, the monoliths
of suitcases, the concentric black ice
of early 78s: Richard Tauber
imprisoned by silence, his sharp voice
flat and unheard.

Years later, returning, I find
the bungalow's whale carcass, ribs
stripped of tiles, the wind now singing.

Paul Groves

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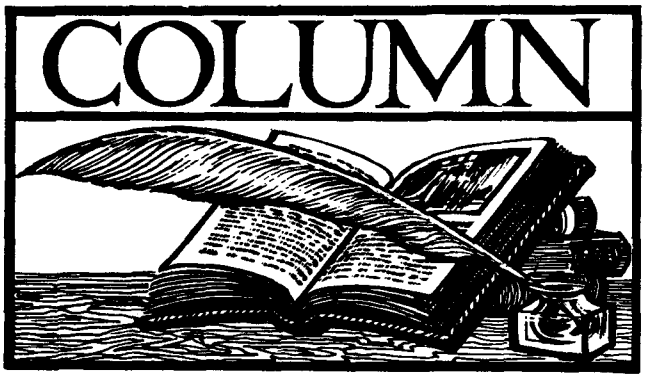

FUND-RAISING: foundationspeak for the ancient trade of begging. Trade? Yes. I sell you virtue—conscience- or tax-relief—at a marginal cost in self-respect. Sometimes dinner's thrown in, or a dignitary; a car badge or an emblazoned necktie. The reality's still the outstretched palm. Now and then it drips with largesse. The case in point this summer was *Live Aid*—the mass rock concerts collecting cash for Africa, watched by millions across the world.

You may have been one of them. Intermittently, I was, duly squeezing my bank account until it moaned. But I didn't feel much virtue. The sight of starving children soon quells self-congratulation. And mere money seems a remote blunt instrument when what we want to give is direct specific help. What's all this about grain marooned in African dockyards? Exorbitant port charges? Private contractors taking a cut? Railway bridges that should have been strengthened against the floods? Permits required for lorry convoys? A ban on aid to rebel areas? Threats to the emergency airlift? . . . Reading newspaper stories, hearing travellers' cautionary tales, I feel the old intolerant impatience. Who were the villains? Where was the bottleneck? Couldn't the donors storm in and sort it out? Simplistic paternalism, probably. But the French used to topple African dictators, and the Americans ran the Berlin airlift for thirteen months. Have we grown timid, mean, lazy, selfish, and weak?

The crowds at the concerts, and the performers, seemed quite the reverse. It was a generous frenzy. Yet I for one found it paradoxical. I'm no rock fan: I kept remembering Groucho's line in *Animal Crackers:* "How much do you charge *not* to play?" ("You couldn't afford it" was Chico's reply.) Well, if this was the din that launched a thousand lorries, so be it. But what pandemonium! Okay, I'm out of touch. The last pop musicians I could just about bear were the Beatles. Even their thump-and-howl sounded like a delivery-boys' revolt. I avoid boutiques on musical grounds alone—just as I'd like to avoid all those elevators that drool 1930s dance-tunes. Summer traffic jams are a cacophony—not of engines, but of pre-packed heavy metal from other cars' cassettes. What is it that people *like* about the stuff? Hypnotic monotony? The memory of mother's heartbeat? The sound of some demented factory? Pseudo-heroic self-pity in those fierce discordant wails?

It was all there again in the *Live Aid* concerts; but at least once there was something else. A youngish lead singer in the obligatory workman's outfit—jeans and a sleeveless vest—with a cross-looking moustache, and a microphone on a metal rod, began chanting over and over again a few unintelligible words, summoning the crowd to do likewise in a to-and-fro rocking rhythm which gradually grew confident and resounding, the whole audience swaying like wheat in a wind. It's an old preacher's trick, and a stage performer's: Danny Kaye used it with nonsense words in his solo act. But this man was different. His eyes burned at the spectators, exuding what looked like hate. Then he whipped round, holding his microphone rod like a submachine-gun, spraying the arena with imagined bullets. The customers loved it. Did I say a generous frenzy? Perhaps I was wrong. Twitch the strings a little, change the settings, rewrite the script, and this might just have been Nuremberg in the 1930s, with another manipulated crowd.

So, for me, the *Live Aid* experience wasn't only a festival of light. Splendid though its aims and achievements were, the mass phenomenon threw some chilly shadows. Yet, in doing so, it may simply have repeated what television does so often—reinforce stereotypes and clichés. Was the singer really full of hatred? He may have been merely excited, parodying gunfire, having juvenile fun. Was his audience potential Hitler-fodder? They wore the youth uniform, but they didn't behave like hooligans, despite the pile-driving beat. And when I actually come across rock musicians, they often seem quiet, polite, and musically sophisticated—not at all the sneering tearaways they appear on the screen.

IT'S VERY EASY to forget such meetings when slumped in front of the box. Casting directors, especially, have a lot to answer for. Thanks to their choice of actors, notably as heavies, don't we all tend, however slightly, to expect real-life villains to look villainous, heroes heroic, simpletons stupid, whizz-kids keen? How much has Tony Benn suffered from his chance resemblance to Larry Hagman? Does Donald Regan ever look in the mirror and think of Lee Marvin? And who was it likened François Mitterrand to Lino Ventura? Hardly one of his friends.

Similar TV sterotypes affect the way we look at nations. For many months in Britain, Channel 4 has been repeating the twenty-year-old *Avengers* series—half-mocking spy extravaganzas with Alfred Hitchcock's habit of planting melodrama in idyllically humdrum settings. At the time, in the 1960s, these tales embodied the new British self-consciousness. Their heroine was a liberated woman but not a women's liberationist: svelte and sexy, she had a good line in wisecracks and karate. The hero, jokily public-school, wore country tweeds and drove an open vintage car; but his bowler hat could become a weapon. The moral seemed to be that swinging Britain could still rely on the bulldog spirit against technological foreign fiends. Revisited today, in the post-affluent, post-Falklands era, the world of *The Avengers* looks touchingly confident and cosy. But try to spot an Englishman in a French or German TV drama, and you're likely to find an *Avenger* clone, impeccably dressed as a Newmarket race-horse owner, and without the camp irony which spiced the original. The same applies, *mutatis mutandis,* to British small-screen portraits of Americans,

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Frenchmen, Italians, or Russians. In this respect, television is *The Boy's Own Paper*.

It also affects our way of thinking and writing. "Whom do you trust?" ask opinion-poll researchers: "The Americans? The Russians? The Germans? The French?" What images are these blanket expressions meant to evoke? In part, at least, they recall television memories. "The Americans" might include a mean, tough cop with an Italian mother, or some cardboard tycoon figure from *Dallas*. "The Russians" would surely suggest sour expressions and fur hats. "The Germans" might mean cigars plugged into plump businessmen's faces, or beer and *Lederhosen,* or something worse. "The French", I'm almost certain, would be smoking Gauloises, shrugging their shoulders, and plotting an unfair diplomatic coup. On this level, as in much of the press, nations are members of a summer stock company, perpetually typecast. The dramas vary; the responses don't. That's why we're disturbed when a Robert Redford dreamboat plays a baddie, or a well-known hoodlum actor turns priest.

It took time, for example, for attitudes to realign themselves after World War II. Songs like *Russian Rose* were still echoing down Tin Pan Alley while Stalin broke his Yalta pledges. "The Italians" quite quickly turned from Mussolini's dupes into De Sica's sad heroes; but "the Germans" still strut about in war films long since vacated by "the Japanese." We've become accustomed to Japanese ingenuity with things like video-cassette recorders, but we still have to remind ourselves of "new Japans" in the offing, ranging from Korea to Brazil. We're endlessly tempted to dwell among stereotypes from the past.

THAT FEELING was strengthened when coincidence brought two books to my desk on the same day. One was an absorbing short study by E. M Forster's biographer, P. N. Furbank. Its title is *Unholy Pleasure*; but before your imagination runs riot let me quote its subtitle: *The Idea of Social Class*.[1] Unholy indeed, in these embarrassed days—but *pleasure*? Only, I'd have thought, the pleasure of picking at a healing wound. As Furbank admits, "it is an uneasy, enervating, somehow murky topic." In Europe, at least, class distinctions persist, despite the decline of domestic service; and in Britain their nuances are embalmed by "accent." Furbank reminds us that commentators on class habitually seek to opt out of the system, usually upwards or sideways; but the effort's as futile as trying to escape from inside a snowstorm paper-weight. There's something comic about middle-class intellectuals berating the middle classes—like tourists complaining about trippers. One of Furbank's best chapters, in fact, discusses the word "bourgeoisie", once neutral, then despised by aristocrats and bohemians, but taken up by Marx and others, exploiting its negative overtones from a different viewpoint, as well as applying it to new aristocrats whose industrial wealth had changed their nature. The glassbound snowstorm never settles. Class changes in Europe are as intricate as a cotillion.

So, for some people, the subject never palls. Shaw's Professor Higgins could still make a living in present-day Britain—although part of his time might now be spent teaching Old Etonians Eliza Doolittle's vowels. Furbank concludes: "If there is an escape from 'class', it must come, not by ignoring it, but by thinking it through, as a prelude to *un*thinking it." He's probably right. But we shouldn't ignore the damage it's done to us, even in parts of Europe where "accent" is less obviously its badge.

> "The weakness of Europeans' basic education hinders their adaptation to a rapidly changing world. It will be all the harder to reform Europe's economy because much of the labour force is ill-educated and sometimes illiterate, tied for years to the same repetitive unskilled tasks."

The quotation comes from the book which complemented Furbank's: *Les métamorphoses de l'Europe, de 1769 à 2001,* by the young French economist Michel Richonnier, recently awarded the first "Golden Dragon" Prize for a new political best-seller.[2]

Richonnier spends little time on stereotypes, whether of nations or of class. His concern is with European backwardness. After a brisk account of the first Industrial Revolution, he points out that Britain was slow to exploit the second: it was "handicapped by the inertia of its industrial and social structure, a victim of its past successes, and paralysed by some outdated laws." The same, he argues, applies to Europe as a whole when confronted with the third Industrial Revolution—in micro-electronics and biotechnology. He tells some revealing stories. How the French data-processing firm CII, for fear of domination by Siemens, and in hopes of winning American markets, spurned its European links with Unidata to go in with Honeywell-Bull—only to find that Honeywell was opening the American market, not to CII, but to the Japanese NEC. How Thomson and Telefunken videos, including the cartons with their names on, are manufactured from start to finish by JVC in Japan. How Thomson was prevented from combining with Grundig, because this time the Germans feared the French. How Europe's protection of its textile industry has forced the new Japans of South-east Asia to switch from textiles into micro-computers, integrated circuits, and word-processors—which they sell to Europeans who continue sewing shirts. How Japanese operators of computer-controlled machine tools get not only a full secondary education, but also specialised training as programmers—whereas in France such "higher skills" are confided to white-collar workers and kept off the shop floor.

In the end or the beginning, Richonnier believes, it all comes down to education:

> "In most European countries, vocational specialisation begins at sixteen, in technical colleges or as apprentices in firms. The first choice may even be made much earlier, sometimes as young as twelve. Selection is by failure. In

[1] *Unholy Pleasure: The Idea of Social Class*. By P. N. FURBANK. Oxford University Press, £9.50.

[2] *Les métamorphoses de l'Europe, de 1769 à 2001*. By MICHEL RICHONNIER. Flammarion, F.Frs.85.00.

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France, 'the duds are sent for technical training.' In Germany, where its prestige is higher, every *Land* has its own rules; but in most cases young people are divided at twelve along the following lines: the top road leads to general education, the low road to technical training, which is often the destination of those in the middle too."

All this is "a terrible waste of talent."

It's also, of course, the product of social stereotypes. For many Europeans still, an engineer is a man (not a woman) with black, greasy hands crawling out from under some vehicle. A factory is a Dickensian hell-hole. Selling is vulgar. Venture capital is unsound. The honoured professions are those which deal with words and paper; where if one's hands get dirty it's only in surgery; where money makes money in a distant, clinical fashion, through the law or banking; where archaic ritual still rules.

RICHONNIER'S VISION of the future is generous and optimistic:

"In the information society which is already springing up, workers will no longer need precise and limited know-how: machines will provide that. What workers will need is a solid technical grounding, to understand the production process they supervise, and to take charge of it in emergencies or breakdowns."

To complete this new society, he concludes, Europe must unite more purposefully: "without a political Europe, there is no solution."

Tempting as I find that credo, I remain on my guard. Since Richonnier wrote, European governments have proposed a *"Eureka"* consortium for advanced technology. It may need to raise funds—i.e., beg. But it may, without great political ambitions, remedy some of the weaknesses Richonnier deplores. And, however much Europe needs to modernise—if only to finance its own social security—my guess is that technological pleas appeal mainly to élites.

To millions in the post-War generation, "Europe" was more like *Live Aid*—a matter of life and death. Heaven forbid that the European Commission should mount rock concerts. But they tap the energy and emotion that good causes need.

M

Orpheus gives an encore

When they awake it is midwinter: a London bedsit.,
floral curtains, iced-up windows—and for
the raging winds at Delphos there's the hiss
of faulty central heating.
Next-door, a closet Monteverdi howls aloud
his breakfast madrigals and canzonetti
in as many parts as he can manage
while his kettle boils
drier than any *secco* recitative.

The Hero's triumph over death is symbolised
by simple gestures, stretching and the like,
performed with caution lest his touch suggest
awakening desire.
The Heroine lies still. She remembers nothing
of the songs that charmed her here last night,
only the rain upon a corrugated-
iron roof, hammering
out applause after the final chorus.

They kiss awkwardly and feel obliged to give
an encore. There's the hiss of Stygian waters
and, on cue, the gondolier next-door
begins to sound like Charon.
Terrified they'll lose one moment's tenderness,
her ghost and his mortality embrace.
Winter sunlight chills the room and lays
discoloured flowers, shuddering
at the slightest draught, upon them both.

Ron Butlin

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Peter Porter

A Born-again Grammarian

Let us celebrate in dark days his rebirth,
Glorious rejoinder,
On urban walkway, shopping precinct, Firth
Cemented half over,
Calligrams especial of pre-tested truth,
His seen new programme,
Unshunning coy gossip or phoneme uncouth
(His diesel's no slow tram),
Trundling past ceremony of both drys and wets,
Trusting the copula,
Driving the basics back to their pamphlets,
Basting the popular
In juice of new pedantry—he the polymath
Gives us the complex,
Science in syntax, Bowra on Borneo, Plath
Torn out of context—
He's for the Pentecost, strictest Sargasso,
Ruched to his runes,
His epic *Dynasty*, Dylan his Tasso
But Ashbery for tunes,
Mined from the dictionary, past phrase and fable,
Beckett's and Joyce's
Curiously purple points now marketable
As people's choices;
Dovetailed in discourse unflappable jargons
Cherished at conference,
King-killing ordinance slapping down Sargons
(Stabbing both mood and tense),
Yet sure at moments what the past utters
(Gods of the Hellenes);
Like Schliemann at Mycenae his heart-piece flutters,
Widest of wide screens;
When to an audience Aeschylus's lookout's
Speech takes his tongue,
Pasts comes alive then, holiest truth spouts
Mere helots among—
All know the gift of tongues, Wayfarer's word-hoard
Through Burroughs's jissom
Served up as now-knowledge, type of restored
Necroneologism.
So do we write him, thus PR'd, promoted:
More now attempt we!
Not just some Chair of Comparatives voted
Peremptorily,
Rather our sights we raise, doxologising
This man both crutch and aid,
This man redeems us: cease now apologising,
Launch here our Crusade!
Giant of nascent truth, hid in his father's thigh,
He takes of Zeus
Logos and lotos-flower, word from on high,
Net shaken loose,
Tall and panoptical, suiting all lands and creeds,
Occluding doubt;
Where there are men to save, verbs more than deeds,
His be the handout.
Grey dawn is coursing (who called this darkness?)
Flooding the alleys;
On with our motley now, stifle we starkness
Crowd to the galleys.
By road and underground, in bus and taxi,
Sporting his image plain,
Leaving politicos, Thatcher or Craxi,
Move we in main.
On to the proving ground, stadium of satyrs
Gladiatorial,
Where practised athletes ran or spun platters,
Path editorial
For us late starters, *Machtmodernismus*—
See what the word will do!
Climb to the summit! Station the isthmus!
(Clamp old to new)—
Man in this boldest of his bold declensions
Brazens the speech-sign
Over his craft and joy, his built-in tensions,
Blots out the supine:
His the great theory, the coding, the discourse,
His the retrieval;
Erstwhile the glory, the study of Old Norse
Or Geste Medieval—
Time now for action, so up brother, rise up,
Streak from your seat,
Come to him, testify, bring him the cup
Chaliced, complete,
Aspirant, shriven, emblazoned with joy,
New world beginning—
Words must refashion what words destroy,
Losing and winning.

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Allen Curnow

Lo These Are Parts Of His Ways

and to make up my mind about God before
he makes up his about me put myself
in Wallace Stevens's place and
God wherever he pleases
and a precious pair of us that makes

two minds in two minds each about
the other or say four deadlines
in search of a Last Supper
r.s.v.p. time running out
no entry on the diary's blank last

fly life's dateless day
numinous yesses and noes making
minds up alters nothing materially
can you see God changing his or
being in more than one about

anybody's finally settling
for "naturally" the right one like
in the event of malfunction aborting
the count-down? our recreation's
chess he's white and I'm black

the board expands infinitely
at an infinite speed like Pascal's point
with mirrors which mirror mirrors
behind each of us his lips think
in his native Russian one forefinger

pauses on a pawn's or a bishop's
bonnet when it lifts we both know
that move's for keeps operations
belong to control where celestial
software lisps eternal

zero-zeroes to the pacemaker
aorta *soft drum* the screen's bare
of digits all circuits locked *prepare to*
meet thy God have you an appointment?
belief hung in mid-mind between

the ethereal and the dustiest
answers let it hang! whose creature
whose creator to believe him into
existence or out of it? the heart
grows obsolete bottled protons

of an irrefutable *might*
majesty dominion and power poke
infernal noses into heavenly
business mutually assured
destruction keeps both of us guessing

demonstrable changes in the forms
of matter like fire-storms hanging
fire *Et O ces voix*
d'enfants chantant DIES IRAE
DIES ILLA exist in a mirror

a lifted forefinger for God's sake
whose? playing for keeps
my playmate's one unbelievably small
particle and who knows whose dust's
on fire in whose mind's eye?

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Stendhal: The Enigmatic Liberal

By Renee Winegarten

"Quel homme suis-je? . . . En vérité, je n'en sais rien."
STENDHAL, **Souvenirs d'Egotisme**

"CANDIDLY", said Henri Beyle, candour (or the appearance of it) giving him his charm and his perennial fascination, "I am, all in all, a bloody liberal . . . *moi, je suis ouvertement un chien de libéral, pour tout potage*."[1]

He was writing in March 1818 from his beloved Italy to his confidant, Baron Adolphe de Mareste, now an official at Police Headquarters in Paris, whom he suspected of being "unconsciously somewhat *ultra*." At the time, Beyle was 35, and another nine years would pass before he signed, as "Stendhal", the preface to his first novel, *Armance*, subtitled "Scenes from a Parisian Drawing-room in 1827", and set in the pallid society fostered by the Bourbon Restoration. He was using the words "*un chien de libéral*" ironically, because that was how his detested royalist father, Chérubin Beyle, together with the whole party of *ultras*, saw the liberals—as dangerous enemies of religion and as opponents of the re-established order.

It is doubtful whether the idea of being a liberal as such would have bothered him particularly before the downfall of Napoleon and the great man's humiliation at the hands of his English jailers on Saint Helena. Only after the return of the Bourbons and the ensuing "White Terror" did an individual's political attitudes or allegiance begin to count with him a great deal as a criterion of integrity or magnanimity. His novels certainly demand a knowledge of the dangerous political undercurrents of his day, and they scarcely make sense without it. To manoeuvre one's way somehow through rapidly changing and opposing régimes became a necessity for survival. Few writers of stature can have pirouetted as self-consciously as Stendhal in his numerous prefaces, where he appears preoccupied about the possible political responses of his readers and their putative assessment of the nature of his own commitment. And there can be few writers so ostensibly haunted by political affairs whose true political position, despite endless ferreting by skilful scholars among his often cryptic marginal notes, remains so problematic.

Beyle, who was intensely secretive and such a lover of mysteries that he invented and employed at least a hundred different pseudonyms besides the Germanic-sounding title, "*M. de Stendhal, officier de cavalerie*", which he made famous, proclaimed his liberal stance in cypher and in clear. Yet there were those among his circle who ventured to doubt the sincerity of his liberalism as he—perhaps occasionally doubting it himself—admitted. One of them (or possibly his own shadow) apparently said to him: "I can tell you are an aristocrat . . . you are liberal in name only. . . . No, no, you are not liberal. . . ." Friends as well as critics ridiculed his "*ducomanie*", his fondness for titles. Prosper Mérimée, his crony in exploits that were known to the Romantics as orgies of debauchery, observed after the elder writer's death that

> "Beyle, original in everything . . . prided himself on his liberalism and was, in the depth of his being, a complete aristocrat."[2]

Like Stendhal—who, in the context of his liberal opinions, often remarked with some complacency upon his aristocratic turn of mind and tastes—the author of *Carmen* was suggesting a contradiction between political liberalism and inner aristocratic inclinations. At the time, this contradiction appeared all the more odd in a man of solid bourgeois origins who despised everything bourgeois while holding a pretty poor view of the flesh-and-blood aristocracy itself. Later novelists would reflect a similar betrayal of their origins in favour of an artistic aristocracy of sensibility without, however, any bent towards liberalism.

WHAT EXACTLY DID STENDHAL MEAN by the now much maligned word "*libéral*", and in what way can he lay claim to the appellation? The word *libéral* in a political sense having entered the French language in the mid-18th century, it only became widely current in that sense around 1799-1800, when Bonaparte was First Consul. If, by "liberal", simply the basic early 19th-century meaning of "one favourable to individual freedom" is intended, then Stendhal was certainly *that*,

[1] Stendhal, Letter to Adolphe de Mareste, 21 March 1818, *Correspondance* (ed. Martineau and Del Litto, 1968), Vol. I, p. 893.
[2] *Racine et Shakespeare*, 1823 (1854), p. 114. Prosper Mérimée, "H.B.", in Charles Bellanger, *Notes stendhaliennes* (1948), p. 157.

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throughout his life, especially where his own liberty was concerned. He rode as the self-proclaimed "hussar of liberty." The liberal journalist, art historian and painter Etienne Delécluze (whose attic gatherings Beyle frequented during the Restoration and who felt both attracted and repelled by the dilettante) noted in his diary that:

> "All things considered, this fellow [Beyle] seems to arrange his whole life so as to enjoy personal freedom at all times and in all places."[3]

But what kind of freedom did Stendhal favour apart from his own? The answer to that query is not at all straightforward.

It is not entirely by chance, nor as a result of misapprehension that—by the time "the happy few"[4] were growing into the numerous members of a cult—Stendhal was admired and sometimes claimed by writers who led or supported opposing political factions. These included on the Right the proto-Fascists Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras, and the Fascist Drieu La Rochelle's like-minded brother-in-law, Maurice Bardèche (author of *Stendhal romancier*, a notable partisan study of the creator of *Le Rouge et le noir*); and, on the Left, the ambitious Socialist leader and ardent *beyliste*, Léon Blum, with his self-revealing *Stendhal et le beylisme*, as well as Communists like Louis Aragon. Aragon thought that if only Stendhal could have lived six more years instead of dying of a stroke that felled him in a Parisian street in 1842, and could have read the *Communist Manifesto*, he would have been a follower of Marx. However extreme this and similar claims may appear, there were—as we shall see—multifarious elements in Stendhal's writings which made it easy for people of conflicting views to appropriate him.

During the last 30 years, critics have been demonstrating some difficulty in placing Stendhal's politics, and have ranged widely through political terminology. A selection of their definitions can produce an amusing cumulative effect. The novelist is qualified at various moments in the critical discussion as a liberal in spirit (Paul Bénichou); an impenitent liberal (Joanna Richardson); more than a liberal, not yet a socialist or, in one respect, a petit-bourgeois socialist (Fernand Rude); the observer who refuses to become entangled in the fight (John Atherton), or who practises the philosophy of disengagement (Robert Alter); indeterminate, negative in his political outlook (F. W. J. Hemmings); not exactly a revolutionist though in alliance with the revolutions of his day, but finally a non-political man (Irving Howe); a sincere but contradictory Jacobin (André Daspre); a Bonapartist (Claude Boncompain and François Vermale); among other things, a Bonapartist with a nostalgia for the *ancien régime* (Victor Brombert); more readily a Jacobin than a democrat, a liberal, and thus finally "conservative" (Michel Guérin in a recent study of the novelist's politics).

In a sense, these opinions are largely true of Stendhal in different moods, but such variations should perhaps, at the very least, inspire caution.

Quite rightly, as it has turned out over a century-and-a-half later, Stendhal feared that politics would become the vampire of literature. He was fond of repeating that the theme of politics in a work of literature was like a pistol-shot at a concert; yet he himself fired that pistol often enough. And he did so despite the fact that there were times when politics depressed him, and times when he determined to have nothing more to do with the time-wasting subject. There were even moments when he felt that "As soon as you introduce politics into a literary work, all that is *hateful* appears, and with it, *impotent hatred*." This was (according to him) the fatal malady of the 19th century, and possibly ours.[5] Presumably, the shot was fired because he felt politics could no longer be eluded and because impotent hatred, "*la haine impuissante*", could not be suppressed.

There is a curious passage in *Armance* where the liberal-minded Byronic hero, Octave de Malivert (whose tragic secret is permanent impotence rather than the temporary "fiascos" experienced by his creator), in an inexplicable rage throws his unfortunate manservant out of the window. Strikingly mysterious in Stendhal's day, sexual impotence as a metaphor for the frustrations of political impotence has surely become a tiresome cliché (particularly favoured by current "socially-committed" dramatists). A good deal of impotent hatred would seem to underlie much of Stendhal's political outlook; it was a special idealistic loathing of the un-idealistic way things are generally managed in this world. This lofty distaste is counterbalanced by a profound wish to be true to "that which is (*ce qui est*)" and by a strong suspicion that in order to cope with political realities one needs the Machiavellian turn of mind of a corrupt arch-survivor like Talleyrand—or of the novelist's own urbane Count Mosca and Leuwen senior, figures at once admired and judged wanting in the higher sensibility.

ALTHOUGH STENDHAL'S NOVELS with their passionate dreams and exploits appear today as the epitome of the Romantic imagination, he was in the forefront of the battle to demonstrate the essential modernity of the mode, and he liked to stress the contemporary relevance of his fiction. For him, politics spelt modernity. Indeed, ten years before he published his first novel, he wrote:

> "In the midst of the great revolution that preys upon our minds, we can no longer study the manners of a people without falling into politics. . . ."[6]

The image of a decline into politics is telling. There is not a novel of his that is free of detailed allusions to the political events of the day, allusions which he rightly knew would in the future require a historian's gloss. This is because, in an age when thinking people were obsessed with the barbarities committed during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, and were consequently preoccupied with the nature

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[3] Etienne Delécluze, *Journal 1824-1828* (ed. Baschet, 1948), p. 425.

[4] Stendhal used the English words, borrowed probably from Henry V's speech at Agincourt, "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers. . . ."

[5] *Racine et Shakespeare*, p. 185.

[6] *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, original edition quoted by V. Del Litto, *La Vie intellectuelle de Stendhal 1802-1821* (1958), p. 546.

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and vulnerability of civilisation, he believed that governments determine manners and culture.

For instance, in his own puff of *Le Rouge et le noir*, signed with the fanciful pseudonym "Don Gruffot Papera", he wrote of himself:

> "Nobody hitherto had depicted with care the manners bestowed on the French by the various governments which weighed upon them during the first third of the 19th century."[7]

In his view, the pre-revolutionary France of gaiety and pleasure into which he was born in 1783, destroyed by the Revolution, had been succeeded by the France of Napoleon which promoted the rise of the bourgeoisie intent solely upon material well-being. For him, post-Napoleonic France became a country made solemn and gloomy during the Bourbon Restoration, under the influence of Stendhal's *bête noire*, the Jesuits and their arm, the secret society known as the "*Congrégation*", which liberals saw as an occult government. Inevitably, he himself also changed in his own way, through a series of régimes of different political colour.

A youthful high-minded admirer of the Revolution and the First Republic, he became an ambitious functionary of Napoleon through his connection with the influential Daru family, serving as provisional and later full assistant to the Commissariat of Wars, a post which took him to Prussia, Austria, and Russia. He rose to the position of Commissioner to the Council of State, and then was appointed Inspector of Imperial Furnishings and Buildings. Beyle was sufficiently trusted to be sent on a secret mission to Hungary, about which little is known; and he once acted as personal courier between Napoleon and Empress Marie-Louise. During the disastrous retreat from Moscow he distinguished himself in procuring supplies. In accord with Napoleon's departing advice to his followers at Fontainebleau in 1814 to serve the Bourbons, Beyle solicited a position which he failed to obtain. Not until the advent of the House of Orléans with Louis-Philippe in 1830, when he applied in vain to the conservative-liberal minister Guizot for a *préfecture*, did he find himself a plain consul in an Italian backwater. Yet, whatever official position he might desire or eventually occupy, Louis XVIII and Charles X remained "those Bourbon imbeciles", while he called his master, Louis-Philippe, a rogue.

His awareness of Fouché's five-fold network of police spies under Napoleon, a network that continued into the reign of Louis XVIII, encouraged his talent for the mystification and masks partly required by political expediency. His fears of discovery, which boon companions like Mérimée thought amusingly excessive, were thus grounded in hard fact. Such fears, however, do not help to explain all the fabrications, including those relating to dates and places, that were perpetrated for sheer joy by this avowed lover of truth—"Truth, the bitter truth (*La vérité, l'âpre vérité*)" stands as the epigraph of *Le Rouge et le noir* ascribed (apparently without foundation) to Danton, the patriot with dirty hands. Stendhal, that ironic fabricator of alibis, once had the irresistible effrontery to inform his host, Delécluze, that "When a writer tells me a lie in his book, that's it—he may say the most beautiful things imaginable, after that I no longer believe him." But then he was speaking not of himself and of his own prevarications but of another writer, Joseph de Maistre, whose reactionary obscurantism he loathed.

Beyle's detestation of monarchical régimes, of ecclesiastical influence in government, of the stifling atmosphere of reaction in Europe after the Congress of Vienna, were all too evident in his *Historie de la Peinture en Italie* and his *Rome, Naples, et Florence en 1817*, the identity of whose author (concealed under initials and pseudonym respectively) he ingenuously thought would prove impenetrable to the police of Metternich. Instead, these works alerted the Austrian police and their Italian henchmen who, whenever he was in Italy, spied upon him as a dangerous liberal for the rest of his life. Even some eleven years after their first appearance, both of these books were still serving as a pretext for his expulsion from Milan, the city he adored.

> *. . . ces malheureux ouvriers en soie. . . . Ce genre de pauvres dont j'ai pitié me gâte absolument* la tombée de la nuit, *le moment le plus poétique de la journée . . .*"
>
> **Mémoires d'un Touriste**

How seriously should we take Stendhal's political opinions? In one respect, quite seriously, since he suffered for them, and through them lost the consulship at Trieste. He was not one of those writers who decide suddenly that they know all about political and economic matters without having engaged in any study. Always he was curious to penetrate the workings of the mechanism behind the façade, and to be seen to be in the know by his official superiors and by his friends and readers.

Trained in mathematics, he did not confine his reading to literature: he had studied, for instance, the work of Jean-Baptiste Say and Adam Smith. Without difficulty, Beyle moved from the utilitarianism of Helvétius to the philosophical radicalism of Bentham. In his prentice years he intended to write not only comedies and dramas but a treatise on the influence of wealth on population and happiness. Moreover, he had engaged in commerce (albeit unsuccessfully) in Marseilles after following the actress Mélanie Guilbert there, and he also had recurrent dreams of becoming a banker. His experience as an official gave him an insight into the working of affairs that would arouse the admiration of so illustrious a literary colleague as Balzac.

Yet his own strategy of dissimulation makes him appear at times frivolous and unprincipled, as well as elusive. In his diary as early as 1805 he noted the startling effect that his bizarre words could cause in society, where

> "fools, taking my jests for coolly proffered declarations, and being unable to obtain any hold upon my innermost spirit, will draw from all this that I am a dangerous fellow and, consequently, an *unkind* person. . . ."

Such people would have no idea of his "*âme tendre*", his

[7] *Appendice. Sur le Rouge et le noir*, 18 October-3 November 1832, in *Le Rouge et le noir* (ed. Martineau, 1960), p. 527.

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truly compassionate nature, he thought, adding:

> "If I survive, my behaviour will prove that no man has ever been more open to compassion (*la pitié*) than myself: the slightest thing moves me, brings tears to my eyes. . . ."[8]

In one way he felt perturbed because others could not understand what he conceived as his compassionate private self, his concern for beauty in art ("*le beau*" as represented by the paintings of Correggio), for honour (his *espagnolisme*), and the happiness of the greatest number; at the same time he did not want them to do so and spoil his secret dreams.

His determination to fox them succeeded all too well. One contemporary found him a chameleon. His cousin and future editor, Romain Colomb, said that Beyle was quite the most difficult person to know. As for that discerning judge of literature as well as dazzling colourist, Eugène Delacroix, soon a drinking and whoring companion in Beyle's circle, his first impression of the book on Rossini was that

> "this Stendhal is an impertinent fellow, who is right in too arrogant a manner and who sometimes writes nonsense."[9]

The witty paradoxes, delivered with easy insolence, and the *boutades* or bold sallies with which Stendhal paid for his entry into the Parisian salons of the Restoration (as he disarmingly put it to Prosper Mérimée) dazzled and disconcerted his hearers—and, when transferred to his books, his first readers.

Such *boutades* were, in Mérimée's opinion, however, perfectly natural and simply "the exaggerated expression of deep conviction." Yet he also perspicaciously observed that Stendhal liked to take the opposite view to the one that was being propounded. Or, as Etienne Delécluze once acidly remarked: "His pretension to naturalness was quite unmasked"—Stendhal stood revealed as one who strove to make an impression and who "deliberately adopted a rebellious stance." In effect, Beyle uttered opinions, he did not engage in discussion and, when differences arose, he put an end to the conversation by saying, "What can you expect? There's no way of our reaching an understanding. I'm a *rat*, and you're a *cat*."[10] Such a lack of give-and-take could not appeal to the fundamentally liberal Delécluze.

THE SAME SPIRIT of contrariness and challenge permeates all Stendhal's writings, including his novels. The author adopts an attitude contrary to the one that he assumes, rightly or wrongly, to be held by the common reader as distinct from the rare kindred soul or "the happy few." The connecting links of anticipated explanation are often cut, so that the reader speeds from one astounding position to the next. Stendhal admired above all "those impudent books which force the reader to think" (among which he counted Montaigne's *Essais*), and he intended to write works that would give the reader pause (and still do). But despite the large part played by politics in his fiction, what are ultimately the political implications of *Armance, Le Rouge et le noir, La Chartreuse de Parme*, or *Lucien Leuwen* (that great unfinished novel of political and electioneering chicanery)? As Stendhal, the enigmatic liberal who often suggested that "a novel should be a mirror" (presumably to reflect nature), once asked rhetorically: "To what party does a mirror belong?"[11]

> "*. . . être vertueux, c'est-à-dire utile au bonheur du peuple, fidèle à la maxime:* "Salus populi suprema lex est."
>
> **Letter to Mareste, 22 April 1818**

IN EARLY 19TH CENTURY FRANCE there were all sorts of liberals, and Stendhal sympathised largely with the radical branch. He disliked mainstream liberals like the courageous "dissident" of her times, Mme de Staël (meanly persecuted and exiled by Napoleon), despite admiration for some of her ideas, from which he freely borrowed without acknowledgement. No doubt he liked even less the *doctrinaires* or conservative wing under Royer-Collard (who, it now appears, was in the pay of Louis XVIII). The self-styled compassionate Beyle followed Helvétius, who had declared that "all one's feelings, including the feeling of humanity", should be sacrificed to the principle of utility, and that "everything becomes legitimate and even virtuous if it is for the public safety."[12] Virtue and the desire for the general happiness were synonymous for Beyle as for Helvétius. Those unreasonable persons who did not hold the same view of what constituted virtue and the general good were necessarily enemies of the people, "*ennemis du genre humain*"—an enduring ideological notion which has had catastrophic consequences.

This was the spirit of Robespierre, Saint-Just, and the Terror, and what Stendhal was still calling in the last month of his life "*ce gouvernement énergique de 1793.*"[13] For, as he had earlier maintained (I quote his own private *franglais*): "*I am* encore *in* 1835 *the man of* 1794" (when, in fact, he was still a boy of eleven).[14] According to this professed liberal, his fellow liberals were a stupid lot. One serious complaint against them was that they attacked the Romantic (that is, for him, the *modern*) movement in literature. Worse still, the liberal party—with the exception of the "pure" Lafayette—could be bought and sold; as for liberal writers, they were either paid hacks or charlatans. His portrayal of the so-called liberal party under Fabio Conti in *La Chartreuse de Parme* is hardly more flattering. Stendhal appears as a Jacobin in spirit, then, or "*libéral-jacobin*" as one marginal note has it—though his visit when eleven or twelve years old to the Jacobin Club in Grenoble during the Revolution, with (as he later reported) its vulgar ill-spoken men and low-class

[8] Stendhal, *Journal*, 23 February 1805, *Oeuvres intimes* (ed. Martineau, 1961), p. 613.

[9] Delacroix, *Journal*, 23 January 1824 (ed. Joubin, 1932), Vol. I, p. 47.

[10] Etienne Delécluze, *Journal*, pp. 117, 421.

[11] *Deuxième Préface, De l'Amour*, 1834 (ed. Del Litto, 1970), p. 336; Première Préface, *Lucien Leuwen* (ed. Martineau, 1950), p. xxxv; *Avant-propos, Armance* (ed. Martineau, 1949), p. 3.

[12] Helvétius, *De l'Esprit* (1758), Vol. 1, pp. 80-81.

[13] *Troisième Préface, De l'Amour*, 1842 (ed. Del Litto, 1970), p. 341.

[14] *Vie de Henry Brulard, Oeuvres intimes*, p. 144.

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women, did not live up to heroic preconceptions.

If he was, moreover, "a rabid republican", it was (he once disclosed) in order to contradict his royalist father and family. His boyhood enthusiasm for political assassins, and especially Charlotte Corday (whose lofty Cornelian justification of her "patriotic" murder of Marat at her trial foreshadows the very expressions of Julien Sorel), led his aunt and his grandfather to find in him an "*âme atroce*." He declared that he preserved throughout his life his "noble and republican principles", the hatred of tyranny which made him rejoice at the execution of Louis XVI (or, later, dream of assassinating Louis XVIII)—both monarchs seen as traitors who called upon foreign armies.

His republican friend, Fortuné Mante, drew him—or in another version of his autobiography, "almost" drew him—into the conspiracy against Napoleon led by General Moreau. For Beyle, along with these conspirators, saw liberty, the Revolution and the Republic "betrayed" when Bonaparte was crowned Emperor in 1804. Moreau's conspiracy was discovered. Napoleon's reaction was swift. An eyewitness whose father was imprisoned in Vincennes, solely for having presided over an electoral college that had voted for Moreau, told Beyle that "the dungeon is full and the terror so great that those very people who were released do not dare to say that they have been there."

Meanwhile, Beyle had already reached the sensible conclusion for himself that "the time for being republican has passed."[15] There followed the years of concentrated ambition when he became a freemason to further his career, years when he called himself "Monsieur *de* Beyle" to keep up with the newly-created Napoleonic nobility (whom he later mocked). Stendhal might continue to esteem "republican virtue" but he would also find it fierce and grim, and ultimately the republicans were criticised for a fatal flaw: for not being realists, for not appreciating "that which is."

PARTICULARLY STRIKING is Stendhal's fluctuating attitude to the dominant figure of the age. Clearly, while Napoleon Bonaparte was in power, Beyle with his typical contrariness was by no means uncritical of the great man and his adherents. He even tried to write a satire on Napoleon, whom he called "*Milan*" in his diaries. Beyle's friend, Félix Faure, who was with him in Vienna, noted that he regarded the Napoleonic soldiery as sheep for the slaughter. Of Napoleon's generals (with the exception of Duroc, his patron), Beyle had a poor opinion: they were corrupt sycophants and mediocrities. He detested those dashing officers who lived solely for killing; and once, on seeing the mortal remains of several generals of the Imperial Guard, he let slip the savage words, "*Ce sont des insolents de moins!* (A few overbearing fellows less!)."[16] On the way to Moscow, disgusted with his fellow men, he wrote to Faure that no decoration could possibly compensate for the moral as well as the actual mud in which he was immersed. And "*la boue*", a shovelful of which is thrown at Lucien Leuwen at Blois for his somewhat shady role in the election campaign, a portion of the stuff even entering his open mouth, would remain a favourite metaphor of Stendhal's for all the distasteful aspects of political experience. These were once neatly summed up in a letter as "*la boueuse politique*."

After Napoleon's fall, Beyle voiced his critical opinions of the usurper during the 1820s, when writing anonymously for a British public presumably delighted to read them, in his contributions to the *Paris Monthly Review*, the *New Monthly Magazine*, and the *London Magazine*. In the 1830s, in his *Mémoires d'un touriste* (an account of a journey through France supposedly written by a commercial traveller in the iron trade and an admirer of the régime of Louis-Philippe which the author positively despised), he depicted Napoleon corrupted by absolute power. Beyle was an opportunist who liked to keep tongue in cheek. Let the readers determine for themselves the author's true position, if they could. He was also the novelist who could easily adopt a variety of roles that did not exactly harmonise.

If Beyle, supposedly prevented by his fiery Milanese mistress, Angela Pietragrua, made no attempt to join Napoleon on the return from Elba, none the less he was shattered when, in the Café Florian in Venice, he heard the news of the Emperor's fall. Now the candle was snuffed out. Now there would be nothing but "mud." Soon he became convinced that the historic "liberator" of Italy was being martyred on Saint Helena by the English, those masters of cant, of "*hypocrisie de bonté et de moralité*." The fact was that Napoleon had at least as many faces as Stendhal. The rise of the Napoleonic legend brought liberal Bonapartism with it as yet another party of opposition to the restored Bourbons. It took the Italian liberal dramatist Silvio Pellico (who would spend many years in the dread Spielberg prison) to define the Bonapartists as "false liberals." Stendhal knew perfectly well that Napoleon at the height of his power "was not then as liberal as on Saint Helena and in the book by M. de Las Cases."[17] But he also felt that, in the matter of patronage, he himself had fallen with the Emperor. He too belonged with all the dissatisfied and humiliated veterans on half-pay, even if he might not commit himself, with them, to anti-royalist intrigues that were often crushed with bloodshed.

Already, by 1816, he was enlarging on his role in the Napoleonic entourage, presenting himself as an expert eye-witness to all those power-dazzled Englishmen who were fascinated by the Emperor—like Byron, to whom he was introduced at La Scala, Milan. He took to lauding the useful improvements in sanitation carried out in Italy under Napoleon. Eventually, he could be found praising the Napoleonic campaigns whose grisly carnage he had depicted with revulsion in his diary. By 1818 he was even ready to draft a challenge to one who had dared to criticise the figure he would call the "*seul grand homme des temps modernes*."[18] On the epitaph he composed for himself as "Arrigo Beyle Milanese" in 1821, the year of the deposed Emperor's

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[15] Stendhal, *Journal*, 23 February 1805, p. 613; 3 May 1804, p. 460.
[16] *Souvenirs d'Egotisme*, p. 1411.
[17] *Courrier anglais* (ed. Martineau, 1935), Vol. I, p. 214.
[18] Letter to an unnamed correspondent, 26 June 1818, *Correspondance*, Vol. I, p. 926, p. 1403 note; *Promenades dans Rome*, 1829 (1955), p. 532.

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demise, he inscribed: "*Il respecta un seul homme:* NAPOLÉON", and he did so not very long before his anonymous criticisms of the despot were appearing in the British press.[19] Later, the libertarian Beyle would settle down to await Napoleon's unknown successor, the great man of the future.

HIS REPUBLICAN FRIEND, the naturalist Victor Jacquemont (whose father had lost his post through being compromised in the failed conspiracy in General Moreau's name led by General Malet in 1812), told him plainly:

> "In your admiration for the Hero, I find you rather vulgar. . . . If you judge by the greatness of the result, Franklin and Washington stand above Napoleon. They made the Republic of the United States, while Napoleon made Louis XVIII's bed. . . ."[20]

To Stendhal, Jacquemont's attitude spelt mere envy.

At intervals over a long period, Stendhal would be engaged in writing a life of Napoleon. At one stage he was moved to return to it by Mme de Staël's study of the French Revolution. With its severe criticism of Bonaparte's concentration on war rather than liberty, it is a work he may well have seen in manuscript before its posthumous publication, and it made him absolutely furious. Her scurrilous attack ("*libelle*") upon the fallen hero simply had to be refuted, he felt. In the end, it was left to Prosper Mérimée to point out to Beyle that in the preface to his book on Napoleon his pose of having frequented the society of the great man was based on the three instances when the Emperor had addressed a word to his functionary. In more reasonable moments, Stendhal admitted that "*Napoléon ne parlait pas à des fous de mon espèce. . . .* (Napoleon did not speak to crazy fellows of my sort)."[21]

All the same, one part of his being dreamed of the days when, at seventeen, he had crossed the Alps for the first time as a dragoon in Bonaparte's armies. This was the nostalgia that would colour the glowing opening pages of *La Chartreuse de Parme*, with their vision of the entry of the victorious French into Milan. He came to envisage Bonaparte the *condottiere*, the embodiment of energy, the self-created man of power, as a weapon with which to berate current monarchist régimes and societies. The fact that evils like corruption and spying had been just as rife under Napoleon as under the monarchs who succeeded him did not seem to bother Beyle overmuch. Fascinated by power, the liberal Beyle could (as he wrote in a letter to his friend Mareste[22]) forgive much in those who, like Danton or Robespierre or indeed, Bonaparte, risked their lives and "*seized* power." Whatever their misdemeanours, such men saved the country and made it what it was. How could their patriotic daring be equated with the conduct of a favourite minister like Decazes who simply had to please his decrepit master, Louis XVIII? The broodings of Julien Sorel would take a similar form.

> *"Aucun peuple n'a jamais plus de libertés qu'il ne* force *son souverain à lui en accorder."*
>
> **Courrier anglais**

STILL, IN THEORY, despite his fondness for those who dared to seize the reins of state, Beyle was in favour of democracy. He said he and his like dreamed of constitutional government in France with an upper and lower Chamber, of moderate institutions that would inspire reconciliation among the various political parties. A constitutional government under a "centre left" ministry (whose advent had been delayed through Napoleon, he told his British readers) would sooner or later come to pass. In his diary he reflected that "outside the English constitution there is no salvation at all (*hors de la constitution anglaise il n'y a point de salut*)."[23] He was in favour of the British-inspired constitutional Charter of 1814 and knew that once it existed, everyone in Europe would want the same kind of arrangement. None the less, in his mood of anger and frustration, he would have liked to see the representatives of the two Chambers put in prison for a month for forcing the Emperor's second abdication. As for elections, he had found them "pretty despicable" in actuality as early as 1803, some 30 years before he conceived *Lucien Leuwen*. He could not approve of having to pay court to his bootmaker. Of the countries that actually enjoyed liberties, like England and the United States, the Englishman's government was vitiated by the excessive power of the aristocracy and the American's by "the cult of the dollar." The trouble, in Stendhal's view, was that freedom and democracy could be inimical to art which, rather like the pearl produced by the sick oyster, might well flourish under tyranny.

For, if democracy was an ideal, it also meant to this bourgeois with aristocratic leanings the rule of the unimaginative bourgeoisie, of people like his father: the rule of mediocrity, baseness and money-grubbing. Yet the creator of Julien Sorel could badger his father to gain his (illusory) inheritance, or he could speculate with friends on the Stock Exchange. Besides, in a rather vulgar way, he was inclined to assess a person's possibilities in life by his or her income. But that did not prevent him from declaring that members of the middle class, concerned primarily with practical affairs, found their reward in money, not in the pleasures of sensibility or art which were the preserve of what he called "*la classe pensante*", later to be known as the intellectuals, those presumably disinterested arbiters of what was useful to the greatest number.[24]

It is scarcely surprising, then, that with his contradictory opinions Stendhal could come to mean different things to different people; or that, after his death, both those who favoured liberal democracy and those on the extreme Right

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[19] *Essais d'autobiographie, Oeuvres intimes*, p. 1500.

[20] Victor Jacquemont, Letter to Stendhal, end 1824, in Stendhal, *Correspondance*, Vol. 2, p. 797.

[21] *Vie de Henry Brulard, Oeuvres intimes*, p. 11.

[22] Letter to Adolphe de Mareste, 11 December 1818, *Correspondance*, Vol. I, p. 952

[23] Stendhal, *Journal*, 23 August 1815, *Oeuvres intimes*, p. 1279.

[24] *D'un nouveau complot contre les industriels*, 1825, quoted by Fernand Rude, *Stendhal et la pensée sociale de son temps* (1967), p. 131; *Préface, De l'Amour*, 1826 (ed. Del Litto, 1970), pp. 330-1, 335.

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who loathed it could find in him a kindred spirit. The Left-of-centre could rejoice in his professions of democratic libertarian faith, and the Right-of-centre in his sustained criticism of democratic institutions and methods, whether in the name of the actual shortcomings of politicians and régimes, or in the name of an élite of intellect or energy.

As for those of a more radical Leftist temper, they too could adopt Stendhal who, if he could not bear the proximity of *la canaille*, wanted "the People" to be happy. He was among the first to thrill to members of what he called (in 1825) "*les classes ouvrières, suivant notre argot actuel* (the working classes, according to our modern slang)"[25] as embodiments of true and unadorned human nature, passion, and energy, . . . rather in the way that Mathilde de La Mole thrills to the low-born Julien Sorel, the strong human plant, when she compares him with the etiolated aristocrats of her circle. Moreover, Julien at his trial voices lower-class resentment, and he rejects the class-ridden justice of the bourgeoisie in a style that would prove prophetic.

There is no doubt that the hardships endured by the working people of his day disturbed Stendhal. On his visit to Manchester in 1826, he was deeply shocked by the plight of the factory workers, by their excessive hours of work, and by child labour. He made his Lucien Leuwen indifferent to the charms of the swooning Madame Grandet because she had refused to contribute to a collection on behalf of the ill-clad Lyons silk weavers who, in bitter cold, were being brought to Paris for trial after their failed strike and uprising.

This compassionate Stendhal was also the writer who professed revolutionary ruthlessness. Indeed, he prefigures in his fiction the ruthlessness of the "*âme atroce*" that issues so strangely from the compassion of the "*âme tendre*." And the more tedious his routine as consul at Civitavecchia, the more keenly his imagination would respond to accounts of crime, assassination, and outlawry. For Stendhal, brigands and outlaws, those primitive rebels (and forerunners of the later terrorist) who then infested Italy, formed a kind of opposition to tyrannical governments that could not be expressed in any other way. This argument of his has, as we know, often been renewed since.

Stendhal belongs with those who would do good to others willy-nilly, who would force mankind to be free. Delécluze reports a highly revealing conversation with him on the theme of the priesthood. A confirmed non-believer, happy to give offence, Stendhal persisted in regarding priests as necessarily either fools or knaves. For him, to talk of conscience—that motive force behind Mme de Staël's sustained resistance to arbitrary rule— is sheer hypocrisy:

> ". . . what is conscience, if you please? . . . Facts can be assessed, measured, proved."

But, inquired the liberal Delécluze, supposing the people want their priests?

> "Will you, who do not wish to be led by priests, go and force people who like to be led by them, to do without them? In that case, we should only change the nature of the despotism, without getting rid of tyranny."[26]

Stendhal took the earliest opportunity of changing the subject, and it is clear that Delécluze had forced him to reveal his hand as one in the line of thought to be characterised by the late Professor J. L. Talmon as "totalitarian democracy."

STENDHAL'S TASTE for violent solutions went rather far on one occasion. He shocked the influential *idéologue* Destutt de Tracy (admired for much, apart from his hostility to Napoleon) together with the liberal Hellenist, Jean-François Thurot (whom the novelist despised), by defining his own "policy" as follows. From the moment he (Beyle) attained power, he would revoke the amnesty granted by Napoleon to the *émigrés* (those royalists who had returned to France after fleeing the country during the Revolution), and he would banish the remaining survivors to the Pyrenees region.

> "I should surround these four or five *départements* with two or three small armies which, to create an impression, would bivouac there at least six months of the year. Any *émigré* who attempted to escape would be pitilessly shot down. . . ."

And he observed: "The faces of Messieurs Thurot and Tracy fell during the expounding of this plan; I seemed ruthless (*atroce*) to these small-minded creatures etiolated by the good manners of Paris." But a young lady standing nearby was impressed with this charitable project and with "the excessive imprudence with which I exposed my inmost self."[27]

So his inmost thoughts were not always primarily of "*le beau*" and "*la pitié*", as he had once earlier suggested in his diary. Such ruthlessness, characteristic of the "*âme atroce*", should not be seen as an aberration but as an essential element of his private impulses, along with compassion, and Mérimée was probably right in describing such disconcerting outbursts as "the exaggerated expression of deep conviction."

THE SCENE WITH Destutt de Tracy will recall the moment at the ball when Julien Sorel tells the failed conspirator and political exile, Count Altamira, that the end justifies the means and how he would kill three men to save four lives, thereby making an indelible impression on Mathilde de La Mole who overhears him. The attitude of revolutionary ruthlessness (*salus populi suprema lex est*) in Julien and his creator represented an explosion of frustration and anger or (as Stendhal himself had once called it) *impotent hatred*, which found release in the uncontrollable urge to outrage his hearer or reader if only in imagination and through the word. Whatever his sympathies, though, during the Revolution of 1830 he contented himself with watching the action from the colonnade of the Théâtre Français. It was only in March of the year following the July Revolution that he expressed disappointment with the fate of two reactionary politicians:

[25] *Courrier anglais*, Vol. 5, p. 217; see also p. 349.
[26] Etienne Delécluze, *Journal*, pp. 417-419.
[27] *Souvenirs d'Egotisme*, *Oeuvres intimes*, pp. 1426-7.

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"First colossal blunder not to have strung up Polignac and Peyronnet."[28]

Despite Stendhal's many fascinating versions of his life, where he tries to probe the mystery of his nature, little is known about his conduct at certain periods. Some now believe that he may have lived as a dilettante partly upon the customary "bonuses" that in all likelihood he had obtained in Napoleon's Commissariat of Wars. It is curious that he—who as a Napoleonic functionary had to report on military morale or disaffected clergy—should have fancied himself afterwards as a private source of information, even relating each day to his friend Mareste, employed at Police Headquarters, what he had heard in the liberal salons of Restoration Paris. A number of secret agents were among his associates. One of his first proposals on being appointed consul at Civitavecchia was the creation of an underground network for gleaning information. This was much to the irritation of his superiors, who only wanted him to take note of shipping and other mundane matters. What he really enjoyed was submitting a detailed report on improper goings-on in the Vatican, a duty which lay well outside his terms of reference. And this avowed hater of corruption coolly advised dispensing large bribes among the Italians to further French interests. . . .

Meanwhile, his friends in Italy were chiefly well-known Italian liberals. The Papal police reported that in his conversation he evinced "emphatically liberal principles." This is confirmed by the painter Horace Vernet, when writing to Mareste from Rome, where the bored consul spent much of his time:

> "He wants to speak freely as in our Parisian salons; he argues, settles questions out of hand, and holds forth in his usual style. The wretched Romans, who are scared stiff of exposing themselves to the suspicion of their charming government, stop their ears and beat a hasty retreat."[29]

If Stendhal behaved earlier in similar fashion in Milan at the height of *Carbonaro* activity, when loose talk could have grave consequences, small wonder that his ideal Italian beloved, Matilde Dembowski (who secretly belonged to the feminine branch of the *Carbonari*), had decided to have nothing more to do with this indiscreet Frenchman. Somehow, in Milan, Stendhal had contrived to manoeuvre himself into the unenviable position of being thought by one side to be a secret opponent of the *Carbonari* and by the other their secret supporter (though, unlike Byron, he seems to have done nothing actively to help them). He remained incorrigible in adopting opposing views in his writings and in private; and, inevitably, sometimes his duplicity was discovered.

In Stendhal can be found those irreconcilable conflicts of value that defy logic but prove so richly fertile for his creativity as a novelist.

He esteemed men of worth who had not received a decoration, but he set his friends to work to obtain one for himself. He ridiculed puffs, and wrote puffs of his own work. He claimed to be a liberal, but he was not prepared to forgo his love of grandeur and his penchant for complicity in ruthlessness, or to pay the price of consorting with the underdog that the establishment of a liberal democratic régime would demand. He was the most politically-minded novelist of his age, politics providing the scaffolding for much of his fiction; but ultimately the political element is not what counts the most.

If one could remove politics from *Le Rouge et le noir* or *La Chartreuse de Parme*—perish the thought!—one would have removed a good deal of the ironic comedy but not the essential substance. Ultimately, a Julien Sorel or a Fabrice del Dongo finds true freedom within the self, in the private enlightenment perceived in the prison or the tower. It is the ineffable intercourse of rare kindred spirits that remains in the mind of the reader as the central experience. Here is the ideal realm of the Stendhalian novel; and whether the author ever did more than yearn for such a secret and intimate consummation, glimpsed in exceptional moments in life, seems questionable. True happiness, which is the goal of his passionate heroes and heroines, is not to be found in political activity. Régimes may shape manners and societies; the benefit of the greatest number may be eminently desirable; but the one-time republican Lucien Leuwen—like his creator—knows that he will not find his happiness in any actual Republic.

Yet Stendhal felt that to be modern the novel required the inclusion of politics. Involvement in politics is seen as a dangerous or dishonourable game; but it is, as it were, a necessary trial, and Stendhal would not think much of people who avoided risks, who remained consistently indifferent to action and to "that which is." Here lies the basic pull of his self-contradiction concerning the subject of politics in his fiction.

His own response to politics and to the then new "liberal idea" prefigures in its complexity much that was to follow. That variety of response appears less as the result of hard reasoning in one who prized highly the ability to think than as an emotive reaction of the moment against people and conditions he disliked—and, on the whole, he did not have a very good opinion of his fellow human beings. It is the expression of his changing moods and of his revolt against established positions of power while simultaneously he is exalted by power. In him, the dark modern double-talk about compassion and ruthlessness is already disconcertingly manifest.

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[28] Letter to Adolphe de Mareste, 17 March 1831, *Correspondance*, Vol. 2, p. 254.

[29] André Billy, *Ce cher Stendhal* (1958), pp. 225-6.

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NOTES & TOPICS

London Commentary

The Road to Rocky III

By Edward Pearce

The Government of Mrs Margaret Thatcher looks as if it may soon come to resemble one of those figures in Gothic horror stories which, seemingly in a state of perfect preservation, suddenly crumble in a matter of hours into liquefaction and dust. I get no pleasure from saying this. Mrs Thatcher has her enemies who will take pleasure from her political demise. I am not one of them. But one must now write pessimistically and not merely in the light of the Brecon by-election, though it has added its own touch of the sepulchre to the proceedings.

The image of the Thatcher Government—what the Lady delighted, inaccurately, in calling "Thatcherism"—was a certain radicalism, a serious belief in free markets and competition, a dislike of subsidy, an intimation that Public Expenditure would be cut. The Government differed from the traditional Tory position partly because its leadership was socially very different, partly because there were hard and specific ideas around. These gave "the stupid Party" an unprecedented taste of being intellectually exciting, attracting intelligences rather than cavalry into its ranks, and anyway saying something which was true rather than expedient. Subsidies *are* wasteful, competition *is* economically virtuous, the market *is* wiser than any Sisyphean official chairing a wage board.

For a little while, and in certain specific rushes, like Spring 1981 when £5 billion was taken out of the economy under the guiding influence of Professor Alan Walters, everything looked thinkable. Now we all feel like Wordsworth at 30. The Cabinet is dominated by men calling themselves consolidators—Lord Whitelaw for one, Mr Peter Walker for three-quarters, and (alas) John Biffen, with a fine mind and a melancholy spirit, for another. We are back to a drab unintelligent consensus. The farmers' subsidies with a European alibi remain intact, a grotesque transfer payment to the well-wired rich. An attempt, very marginally, to make the well-to-do pay a larger contribution to their children's higher education was screamed down last year—by the greedy voices of middle classes habituated to welfare payments. The divine right of Virginia Water or Combe Florey to sponge off the Revenue is upheld.

Nor will any reform of Child Benefit as it affects the well-fleshed occur. The fact that such payments leave a man on an income of £25,000 a year with an additional £1,500 tax free, for the up-keep of four children he can already afford to support, will not influence Ministers. The Government is running (and thinking) scared. It is as radical as a loose washer—and a lot of money is dripping out of the tap.

In the field of legal reform the influence of the Lord Chancellor and of the Law Lobby (which is nearly as pernicious as the Farm Lobby) has seen to it that competition by outsiders with solicitors to make house purchase and other operations cheaper will not occur on a serious scale. As one of the seven lawyers out of the nine sitting on the Tory side in committee put it: "We have suburban branches which couldn't stay in business if outsiders were let in." Lawyers' welfare rules. The Conservative Party looks at the moment both frightened and unattractive. It defers everywhere to interests, to people with something to lose by reform; and it is consequently as little disposed to change as may be. The old primitive intestine of tranquil privilege and rigged trading, propped by a taste for supping benefits which morally belong only to poor people, has reasserted itself. The Tory Party has lost the brief flare-up of intelligence and principle and has become quite itself again, a wretched un-ideaed faction, smug and scared in equal proportions.

This loss of a worthwhile purpose occurs at a time of dwindling support in the country, of which the by-election at Brecon and Radnor (a surprising Social Democrat-Liberal Alliance victory) is only a manifestation. Though it is a terrifying manifestation which would do credit to Borley Rectory or anywhere else rendered uninhabitable by unquiet spirits.

The Government is not merely losing by-elections and doing very badly in the polls; it seems to have lost the art of making people respect or like it. It is not a worse or better government than the one which was elected with 396 seats in June 1983. Unemployment is high now, was high then; growth in the economy has actually picked up; an intelligent defence of the broad lines of Nigel Lawson's strategy is very easy to make. Privatisation of industry, always well thought of so far, proceeds apace, though more for slightly desperate revenue reasons than for the better purpose of competition. Things are uninspired, the beer is a little flat, but there has been no major humiliation of Government policy with the single and boring exception of the abolition of the Greater London Council. As for the Opposition, Neil Kinnock has done a good job of projecting his (genuine) good nature and muffling the central awfulness of the Labour Party's conference-determined policies. But the operation hardly amounts to a miracle, and Labour politicians are as surprised at the Government's falling glass as anyone else.

As for the loss of nerve over policies, the sudden rush to consolidate, that is the direct symptom of defeat. It is also a reason why defeat may be deserved, but assuredly it is not a

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cause. The truth for the Tories is that they subsisted for a long time on helpful problems which externalised their unpopularity. The Falklands crisis came at a time when they had been quarrelling among themselves. Never quite the Good Companions, they were looking in 1981 (as now) remarkably like the Dinky-doos.

The mood of victory created by the Falklands was prolonged, in a sullen fashion, by the Scargill strike (like Hitler's war, it deserves the name of one man). An illusion grew up (fostered by the putty, brass, and paint of the meretricious little war and by the dour acceptance that a pocket Stalin in Yorkshire had to be seen off) that the Government had general support and need not pay the gross public the civility of pleasing it a little. The period after the Election had far too much in common with a massive local anaesthetic. With Scargill defeated the Tories did not, as they suppose, collect garlands; they were screamed at by a patient with a half-sawn leg.

I HAVE ENDEAVOURED at other times in these pages to argue that the *little* actions of the Government in that period were its most jarringly unattractive—one thinks of Cheltenham GCHQ, the trials of Miss Tisdall and Mr Ponting (no humbug please, about the Government not being involved). But on a quite different plane are the petty savings which the Treasury for reasons of economy imposed: on the Arts, on Overseas Broadcasting, and on take-away food, and the recent demonstration that it would sooner pay less housing benefit all round in real terms than take any benefit from its own comfortable constituents.

To take an issue which some think trivial and others regard as a monstrous proposal to create sentimental precedents, I personally believe that the Government through the Treasury made an emblematic if uncomputed blunder when it refused to waive VAT on Bob Geldof's *Band Aid* record for the Ethiopian hunger fund. The Government really should not lay the flattering unction to its soul that "people didn't understand." People had a good rough moral idea of what they thought right. They had watched the victims of Colonel Mengistu dying five paces from their own dinner tables. They had a huge and sustained will to do something that would help, shown again at the Wembley *Live Aid* concert. The record was an important part (as a runaway best-seller) of the big giving which followed our nightly view of death. Refusal to join in this exuberance of good will when asked to, was both a major political mistake and evidence of the sclerotic, unimaginative, legalistic nature of Mrs Thatcher's team.

At a low level (and where else should we begin in working politics?) the Government was placed to share in the sympathies and humanities of the people who cast votes. For a sum which in terms of revenue calculations is copper change, it passed up the slightly muddled but blessed good nature of what it calls "ordinary people." Refinements about how to use the money and keep it in sound hands could have come after, but on the basic simple test of shared generosity and kindness of heart the Government marched into the "No" lobby. Not clever!

THAT EPISODE illustrates the way in which this Government functions. It is too slow on its feet to make obvious and advantageous gestures; it is hideously legalistic about technicalities; it has too little flair to understand the enormous importance of symbolic acts—and deep down, especially where the Prime Minister may be personally involved, it is plain mean.

Now, the personality of Margaret Thatcher, narrow, strenuous, overbearing, compounded of small points and a shouting style, underlies everything for good and bad, success and humiliation, which has happened lately to her Party. Just as the Falklands and the pit strike numbed general Tory judgment, so those episodes created for Margaret Thatcher the worst thing that any leader of any country can encounter: her own myth. Thatcher has been behaving for at least two years, despite the fits of circumspection which hold her back from brave or radical causes, like one of the Immortals.

When the unimaginably wrong and improper decision was taken to suppress the small, open-shop and legitimate trade-union branch at Cheltenham GCHQ, she made nonsense of her earlier opposition to the closed shop. Guided by the authoritarian and arrogant Sir Robert Armstrong, she showed contempt for the citizen and what he had supposed to be his rights. According to Cabinet sources, her conduct towards any colleague who attempted to argue against or to mitigate the prohibition was "unbearable." Arrogance in substance and manner, backed by the full authoritarian instincts of the wrong sort of Civil Servant, needs all the by-election defeats it can get . . . for the health of all of us.

Thatcher's peremptory style has fascinated people for years. They were unable to decide whether they hated it or admired it. The anaesthesia of freak external preoccupations prevented them from coming to an early conclusion. Indeed at one high moment, when we were taking the South Atlantic war seriously, it seemed as if the Paul Johnson image of Mrs Thatcher—Elizabeth the First, with a dash of the Madonna—might be accepted. That is not quite the position now. The specific unpopularity of the Prime Minister is an established fact. Her face has been seen from each of the 180 angles which the camera can cover. To the inevitable boredom with a familiar face and a style which has used up its originality must be added a general dislike for the lecturing, moralising, text-pounding style of the lady. When you are told in plain terms by members of her Government who have been steadily loyal in the past that she is now an electoral liability, then, in a huddled climate of electoral thunder, action against her cannot be far away. Her underlying unpopularity, now out of anaesthetic, has even survived an attempt to murder her. What could more eloquently describe her melancholy condition?

IN THE PLAINEST possible language, the era of Margaret Thatcher, which has many achievements to its name, is drawing to a close. I am convinced that she will not contest the next General Election (which must occur by June 1988). I rather think that she will leave long before that term's expiry, indeed that she will not be Prime Minister when the

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Conservatives meet for their annual Conference in October 1986. Either she will jump or she will be pushed. The mechanisms for pushing include a contest at the start of the Parliamentary session, either by a serious candidate—that bagpipe with an amplified drone, Mr Peter Walker—or by an acknowledged man of straw whose function would be to register a heavy protest vote. It is one of the functions of the Whips (currently an exceptionally talented group) or of the Chairman of the backbench 1922 Committee to report to the Prime Minister all news, including the early editions of her own obituary.

The Conservative Party is a mechanism for two purposes—keeping the rich rich and getting itself re-elected. When in serious doubt about either proposition, it falls into a huge and scurrying panic, ruthlessly adopting whatever men and measures will see it and its money right. Suddenly Margaret Thatcher, never much loved, is out of fashion. The possibility that she could come back from the disaster of Brecon (where the Tories ran third) is far more remote than the prospect that the Tories, fitted out with a suitable social conscience and a little veneering, could see themselves out of the current little unpleasantness.

Mrs Thatcher has a sixtieth birthday not too far away and a seventh anniversary of office; her husband needs a shared retirement. Her health has been quite bad enough (two eye operations) for a pretext to be dreamed up. Anything will do, provided it gets no more blood on the carpet than can be decently avoided. Political death in such circumstances is a merciful affair, or at any rate a quiet one—the bowstring, not the firing squad.

The Prime Minister, for all the foolish, hubristic vanity with which office has spoiled a force for good, understands the score better than most. She will fight, of course, as long as she has a realistic chance of survival, but she will not humiliate herself. The self-solacing argument that Brecon is untypical will hold together, like a sand-castle, for a while. She will throw her last resources into whatever vocal facelifts and displays of synthetic compassion she supposes will win back that support which I think she has lost for good.

BUT THE CARDS will fall wrong from here on. The Liberal-SDP Alliance, with precious little merit except in flair and presentation, is custom-built to take votes away from unhappy or anti-Thatcher Conservatives who want a vague, humane, political idol sculpted in margarine before which to make sacrifices—and who better to sacrifice than Mrs Thatcher? The Alliance can hurt only the Tories (which in the much longer term will be its own undoing, and the beginning of convalescence for the Government). But in the interim (a very long one) it will score and score again in the sweet pastures of rural and suburban tranquillity which the Conservatives once held in fee.

Panic need not be immediate. The by-election of Brecon and Radnor has been very big box-office, an electoral *Rocky*. Crisis will come two by-elections from now, with the screening of *Rocky III* in soft rentier country. My slogan for the Alliance would adopt General William T. Sherman and have them "marching through Wiltshire." The Tories have been happily long in mortality, but as luck fails and the aorta with it, they must expect an unbroken run of defeats. An understanding that this will happen—and of all the contingent panics and assumptions—will constitute Mrs Thatcher's grasp of her own position. If she does not know it now, she very soon will.

A Play about the Press

"Pravda"

By Herb Greer

London

WHEN IT COMES to sending up journalism in the theatre, you had better know your stuff. The American classic *The Front Page*, based upon the shark-pool ambiance of 1920s popular newspapers, was a product of playwrights who did know their stuff—and not just theatrically. They had first-hand experience of the people and the business they were writing about.

When Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur wrote *The Front Page* (it was staged in 1928), popular journalism in America was if anything more raffish and "yellow" than it is supposed to be in Britain now. The sins of the press are still a public commonplace, which means that our playwrights in London have naturally got around to taking them up. John Osborne wrote the unfortunate *World of Paul Slickey*, and recent plays by Tom Stoppard (*Night and Day*) and Michael Frayn (*Clouds, Alphabetical Order*) have dealt more successfully with journalism. All these playwrights worked as journalists, so Osborne's special failure may have been due to a slight oversupply of caricature and bile.

This salutary warning was not taken in by David Hare and Howard Brenton. Their *Pravda* "play"—it is actually more of a three-hour undergraduate sketch—shows very little (if any) experience or direct knowledge of journalism. Instead the authors have evidently relied on hearsay from Fleet Street (very dangerous), on what they have selected from reading the newspapers (even more dangerous), and on a collection of coarse and shallow bromides which have become the staple fare of media chat about the press and so-called Press Barons or Fleet Street Lords. On top of these disadvantages, the authors suffer from a virulent strain of what Lenin, with no patience for puerility, called infantile leftism.

Against all this there are a few advantages. The most important of these is the quasi-temple of the National Theatre, which gives a certain civic dignity to the production (Hare is one of the NT directors, and the play was written

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specially for the National). The other virtue is the presence of Anthony Hopkins, returning to the British stage after a long absence to play the leading role.

For some time before it opened, *Pravda* was given a deal of hype by the British press and other media. At one point this extended to an obsequious *Observer* colour-magazine interview with Hare, in which this much-praised playwright held forth on his motives for committing *Pravda* to paper and then to the stage. "I found", he said, "that the big social plays I want to see on the English stage don't exist. Writers seem to have become ghettoised, and make no claim on a large audience. . . ." On these extraordinary assumptions (has Hare never set foot inside the various houses of, say, the Royal Shakespeare Company?) he and Howard Brenton wrote what the enthusiastic interviewer called "a coruscating satire on Fleet Street." The title stems from Hare's conviction that "modern British newspapers are little more than government organs. In fact, it's really about the political climate, where competition reigns unchecked. And about how people *want* evil—a wonderful theme for a play. . . ."

THE CONTEMPT for people and the suggestion that political competition should in some way be checked accord nicely with Hare's recipe for the press, which I will come to in a moment. But first the play: *Pravda* shows more signs of Brenton's comic-strip technique than of Hare's penchant for suburban *angst* and second-hand theorising. It is a clod-hopping attempt to satirise Rupert Murdoch (thinly disguised as a South African corporate psychopath) and his takeover of *The Times*. Anthony Hopkins has a wonderful time as this Afrikaner Demon King, playing for (and getting) laughs with a thick accent, a simian stoop and bemused smirk. He sweeps all before him with *realpolitik* homilies, acid epigrams and financial brute force. As in most radical-chic agitprop, the villain is omnipotent and everyone else is totally helpless. This puts a severe strain on the rest of the cast, who try to compensate for their watery parts in any number of ways: they caper, huff and puff, sneer a lot, run about, mug and grimace, pose furiously, roll on the floor, frown severely, and climb on to furniture and wave their arms. Most of all —apparently with the director's encouragement—they shout. Time and again Hare ranges his actors in a row facing the audience and makes them bellow at the stalls. Alas, for all the gymnastics and noise, the good guys (and bad guys too, except for Hopkins' tycoon) remain a dull pack of posturing ninnies.

The plot-line, barren of conflict and therefore of drama, is devoid of interest. Theatrical moments, when they occur (not often), spring from incidental sketches like Lambert Leroux (Hopkins) playing at martial arts in his Japanese garden and costume. Some humour comes out of remarks—mostly by Leroux—which score off the ninnies. There is a strong nudge-wink or *entre nous* element in the play which draws laughter from Hare-Brenton *aficionados* in the audience. A character had only to stand erect and say "I am a journalist" for a knowing guffaw to ripple through the house. Otherwise this effect operates through a display of the above-mentioned bromides, or samples of What Everybody Knows—i.e. Press Barons are awful crypto-fascists who exercise direct, absolute control over everything their papers print, but don't really care about the press, and are mad as hatters anyhow. Their editors are cynical tuft-hunters and don't care about the truth; the ranker-journalists are liars perforce, who may care about the truth but are too corrupt or weak to do anything about it. In short, from top to bottom Fleet Street is (in Beatrice Lillie's old phrase) all of it just rotten to the core. As a *soi-disant* satire on Fleet Street and/or journalism, *Pravda* never gets above the level of trite, facile prejudices already flogged to death a generation ago and before, not only in the theatre (by much better men than Hare and Brenton) but in other media, and currently over pints of beer in local pubs.

I FOUND much more of interest in the post-opening public discussion of the play—an event staged at the Olivier Theatre, in which Hare and Brenton talked about *Pravda* and about journalism. Their guest onstage was Donald Trelford, editor of *The Observer*—whose paper bestowed such generous advance praise upon the play. Trelford is an important figure in journalism who could have put the two playwrights and their work into some professional sort of perspective. Instead, he read out a prepared statement, rather flattering to the play, declaring that most reviewers had praised it. Indeed, some had.[1] But most of the notices I saw praised Anthony Hopkins, and dealt with the play itself in the proverbial manner of copulating porcupines (very, very carefully). Trelford's dissertation, later published in part on his paper's editorial page, hinted at the play's superficiality without openly condemning it, and in the spoken version made the astonishing assertion that *Pravda* "raised serious issues" about journalism.[2] He was not very specific about these, but seemed to refer to those old chestnuts about bad barons, cynical editors, sullied truth, and so on.

Actually the play and the discussion did raise serious issues, though not, I think, the ones suggested by Trelford. Really at stake were the authors' qualifications for attempting such a piece, and their prescriptive views on journalism. During the discussion Hare recounted a solemn anecdote about the *Daily Telegraph*: a lady journalist's front-page report on China (which pleased Hare) clashed with an editorial inside the paper (which did not please Hare). He urged the lady to agitate for a Hare-approved change in the paper so that editorials would at last have to agree with the reportage. Her comment was, "That way madness lies. . . ." A more acute reply would have noted that a Stalinoid uniformity also lies

[1] *The Guardian* did, for one. And *The Economist*, in a veritable lather of hysterical praise, compared the authors to Aristophanes, Gogol, Mayakovsky, Henry Fielding, and, bathetically, John Gay. Gay, who was a hack, is a fair comparison, but *Pravda* is no *Beggar's Opera*.

[2] I wrote to Trelford for light on the point. He replied: "I don't think the play raises serious new issues about press freedom, but it vividly depicts (and exaggerates) current trends in Fleet Street conduct that serious journalists ought to be taking seriously anyway." But so they are, and have been for these fifty years and more.

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that way, for that surely is the real implication of Hare's complaint. This anecdote reflected a bitter scene in the play, in which a cynical editor altered a left-slanted story to tilt it the other way, making it clear that Hare and Brenton do not object to bending news as such—only to news that is not warped the way they want to warp it . . . to wit, against the Police, the present Government, and other *bêtes noires* of the Left. After the anecdote an amusing question, unasked by Trelford or the discussants, hung in the air: the play's "evil" South African magnate is naturally Right-wing. But suppose, just suppose that this secular pantocrator should change his mind and decide to propagandise the Leftist cause of Messrs Hare and Brenton, and even to use his power and resources to back it politically? (Such things have happened.) Would they still disapprove of his dictatorial style? Or would they be out there with their clenched fists raised, cheering with the rest of the true believers?

There is a short scene in *Pravda* which brings a print-union official onstage to justify the notoriously exorbitant pay-rolls of print-workers in Fleet Street. If the paper is going to print "shit"—so his argument goes—then why shouldn't working men make a couple of thousand a week out of it? Now, Hare and Brenton blame the Fleet Street Barons for all these sins. Are they really unaware that union greed and work-floor malpractices make it impossible for anyone but multi-millionaire "barons" to own a newspaper in Fleet Street? Had they ever stumbled across the point during their "research"? The title of *Pravda* fits their play just a little bit better than Hare and Brenton may have intended.

I WAS STRUCK during the discussion that Brenton and Hare sneered at journalists who excused meretricious work on the grounds that it was what the public wants to read. But when a member of the discussion's audience stood up to condemn *Pravda*'s collection of "*New Statesman* clichés", Brenton replied righteously, "A lot of people want to read those clichés!" He harked back to the 1960s, to indicate that he was terribly upset about the present decline of *The Times*. A journalist in the audience objected to this wild generalisation, pointing out that the paper still offers a remarkably wide spectrum of political material on its Op-Ed page. Brenton, who claimed to have read all the newspapers for six months, was at a loss to answer this. His nostalgia for the good old days had not, it seemed, taken him back to the 1930s and the record of *The Times* on appeasement. Both Brenton and Hare seem to think that Tory slanting of the press is a modern corporate sin. I would be interested to hear their views on Jonathan Swift, who worked as a journalistic hack for the Tories, using his *Examiner* for a *Private Eye*-style campaign against the Duke of Marlborough, a Whig hero. Would they, like Michael Foot, see Swift as a kind of culture hero?

However, the most fundamental issue raised by *Pravda* was not the Left twists and turns of the authors, nor even that a great deal of public money (something like £100,000) was spent to produce a chunk of knee-jerk revolutionary agit-prop. (This sometimes happens at the Royal Shakespeare Company and does not seem to have affected the quality of its good work.) The basic question is whether a superficial, ill-informed and entirely sophomoric piece of theatrical *dreck* should be dressed up as major work, and then given the full great-playwright treatment by the National Theatre of Britain.

Perhaps *Pravda* is the sign of a new direction for the National Theatre—i.e. sharp left in the style of the Royal Shakespeare Company. It has certainly been good box-office, one more proof that the stale formulae of "dissent" have a faithful audience—no less faithful than those who loved the cream-puff banalities of the pre-1950s West End. Perhaps one day British theatre will free itself from these puerilities, but on present evidence that is not going to happen very soon—at least not in the subsidy sector. Until it does, many a playwright will risk the description given to one journalist in *The Front Page*: "a cross between a bootlegger and a whore". . . .

Death of Carl Schmitt

The Crown Jurist

By François Bondy

Zurich

THEY ALL had something in common, these great figures of European fame and Teutonic notoriety—Martin Heidegger, C. G. Jung, Gottfried Benn, and the recently deceased (at the age of 97) Carl Schmitt. The Philosopher, the Psychologist, the Poet, and the Jurist: each of them had a flawed relationship to the dramatic breakthrough of Hitlerism in their time. None of them showed any special sympathy for National-Socialism up until the year of the *Machtergreifung*, the Nazi "taking of power"; none was in his work, or personally, any kind of herald, or comrade, or fellow-traveller of the Movement; none "joined up" in the time of the struggle, the Führer's own *Kampf*, but only when the final political victory was already won.

Then, not unlike many others (perhaps even the millions), the moment for enlistment and engagement had come. Carl Schmitt, for one, entered the *NSDAP* as a party member in May 1933. Soon thereafter he became the leading figure in the Nazis' Association of Academic Lawyers, and in the next year took over the direction of the official jurists' journal, the *Deutschen Juristen-Zeitung*.

In that first year of Hitler's thousand-year *Reich* Martin Heidegger accepted the appointment as head of Freiburg University and delivered his much-disputed *Rektoratsrede*. I often listened in Paris in the post-War years to the attempts of the French Heideggerians to make philosophical, and even

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metaphysical, distinctions between what he said on that unfortunate occasion and the ruling ideology in far-away Berlin; they persuaded nobody but themselves. Even general intellectual admirers of Heidegger like George Steiner (see his Fontana paperback study[1]) concede that the political kow-tow was indefensible. But, for the moment, Mephisto had won yet another Faustian soul.

STILL, IT WAS ONLY for a moment, for what our four souls also had in common was that they could never quite fit, no matter what the shape of the times, into any established order. They surely tried, but were soon frustrated, or weary, or disappointed, or involved in conflict. The poet Benn (who was also a medical doctor) served in the *Wehrmacht*; he referred to this time as his "internal emigration" . . . and indeed went on, alone of our four, to make a full and candid reckoning with the political past, in his book *Doppelleben* (*Double Life*). After the war C. G. Jung wrote a very "Jungian" gloss on the deep psychological meaning of his earlier, pre-War, essay on the rise of "Wotan" in an aroused Germany. As for Carl Schmitt's memoir, *Ex captivitate salus*, written in 1950, one historian called it "a tame and unconvincing apologia."[2]

Were the groves of academe especially vulnerable? Hitler no doubt had won over most of the German student body, if somewhat fewer of the professors and dons. Nevertheless, many of the "big names" remained aloof although foreign critics were always likely to classify them as "forerunners"—I refer to Oswald Spengler, Stefan George, and others among so-called "predecessors." They were different; and they had their differences, as had Ernst Jünger who—he published a cliché-ridden anti-Semitic essay in 1930—after 1933 demonstrated his constant independence. Schmitt had justified the Nuremberg race laws as "the constitution of freedom"; but as a Catholic who had many Jewish and liberal friends he came under fire (in 1936) from the *SS* organ *Das Schwarze Korps*.

THE IGNOBLE spectacle of compromise with the evil empire of the Third *Reich* is often taken to be especially disheartening to men who had faith in liberal Enlightenment ideals. But after all Diderot had remarked that if the Plague were to become King it would have no difficulty in assembling a glittering court.

Power has its fascinations, and they become overwhelming when they are perceived as coming *en masse* from the people. In some cases the critics who reread the books of the "predecessors" became convinced that they could detect where the rot had first set in, and how the ideas or sentiments or (as in Heidegger's case) the very vocabulary were to issue in an Hitlerian *Weltanschauung*. But most of the time there was a real change, a sharp break, and we are often faced with an element of character shock and cultural surprise. Was there anything in the brilliant books by Friedrich Sieburg before 1933 which could have hinted that later, in Paris, he would turn out to be a "sturdy National-Socialist", even trying to explain to the French that Heinrich Heine was not really a *German* poet? There was often an almost inexplicable factor of "contagion", or imitation, involved here; and I sometimes think Eugène Ionesco understood the process best of all when he portrayed the absurdity—in his grotesque play about the only man who could not be a rhinoceros—of confounding breaks with continuities.

THIS IS, I think, especially so in the case of Carl Schmitt, who was not alone in exposing analytically the historic weaknesses of the Weimar Republic, but did not go so far as to point the way towards a Nazi solution; rather he saw a possible way out in an "emergency dictatorship", possibly General Schleicher's which would have prohibited the Nazi Party and militia.

When the moment of compromise came it went rather further in Carl Schmitt's case than, say, in the Heidegger incident in Freiburg. The Philosopher evidently kept some of his Jewish students whereas the Jurist published learned exercises in anti-Semitism which stood in crass contrast to the sentiments and attitudes he had earlier exhibited.

In general, his powers of formulation were put to good use by the leaders of the *Reich* who were only too pleased to be able to exploit theories of identity between *Führer* and *Volk*; to echo his thesis that robust legitimacy took priority over pale and empty legality; and to accept the Friend/Foe (*Freund/Feind*) political dichotomy which sent them off on a "total" search for "total enemies." At the outset Schmitt was thinking of Hobbes, not Hitler. Later he made it eerily clear that this central principle of his "Political Theology" joined concepts to reality in the dramatic possibility of "*physische Tötung* (physical death)."

Whose death? Who were the enemies, and wherein lay friendship?

In 1934, after the bloody Röhm purge, the scholarly professor published an article in his official law journal which proclaimed that "the Leader was protecting the Law (*Der Führer schützt das Recht*)." But this could hardly be what he really meant or truly believed. It was not for nothing that Schmitt's German critics (mostly then in exile abroad) saw in the development of his jurisprudence a kind of "philosophy for warrior barbarians", and called his method "dialectical-diabolical." His was a mind that was always drawn to problems of power and decision. He was a theoretician of

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[1] Although Steiner's conclusion (p.150) is that "Heidegger has postulated the unity . . . of thought, of poetry, and of that highest act of mortal pride and celebration which is to give thanks . . .", he, nevertheless, can write (p.116) on the philosopher's politics:

> "Is there anywhere in Heidegger's work a repudiation of Nazism, is there anywhere, from 1945 to his death, a single syllable on the realities, on the philosophic implications of the world of Auschwitz? These are the questions that count. And the answer would have to be, No."

[2] C. G. Jung, *Essays on Contemporary Events* (1947), ch. 1, "Wotan" (March 1936) and ch. 4, "After the Catastrophe" (June 1945). For a critical view see Paul J. Stern, *C. G. Jung: The Haunted Prophet* (1976), ch. 15, "The Flirt with the Devil", pp.221-21; Robert Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany* (1982), pp.275-77.

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breakup and breakdown, and he welcomed what he called "the bankruptcy of *idées générales*", by which he meant the collapse of the old liberal values and norms.

No, justice was not what he was after, not old-fashioned justice with its finicky and never quite certain approaches to moral standards. His motto, taken from Hobbes, was: *auctoritas non veritas facit legem*: and for him it was always a matter of power which determined law. It shouldn't be surprising that Carl Schmitt not only influenced the German Right; intellectuals on the Left, too, picked up ideas and images in order to strengthen their recent onslaught on the liberal-democratic state, as in the Marcuse school of critics of "pluralism."[3]

THE TROUBLE WITH opportunism is that the opportunities for ambitious outsiders do not usually last very long. The true believers, and especially the long-time Party faithful, are addicted to trusting only their very own (and not even them). The outsiders are always suspect, soon distrusted, quickly isolated, in the end rudely dropped. I think again of Ionesco's hapless Bérenger who so much wanted to be a rhinoceros like the others, but wanting it didn't make it so.

There were some who longed to see Carl Schmitt among the accused on trial in Nuremberg. But he was set free in 1947 and lived quietly in Westphalia, sharing his thoughts with the intellectual pilgrims who came to Plettenberg and who didn't really believe, or allow themselves to be disturbed by, the indictment (as Günter Maschke noted in his obituary in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*) that he was a genuine collaborator with Nazi ideas; that he had any real responsibility for the death of the Weimar Republic;[4] that he had turned his back on the traditional ideals of law and justice as exemplified in liberal and humane social orders. One such pilgrim conceded this much:

> ". . . Schmitt's answers to the great problems were in vain. But which political philosopher has fared any better? What always remains are the questions. . . ."

Pretty tentative stuff with which to memorialise a man who loved total confrontations and total solutions.

THERE IS A PASSAGE in the *Mémoires* of Raymond Aron which recalls his curiously impassioned defence of Carl Schmitt. Aron was generous enough to plead that "at no time did Schmitt ever belong to the National-Socialist Party" and "as a man of high culture he couldn't be a devotee of Hitler and, in fact, wasn't. . . ." With all due respect to our late friend, Aron was in error on the first point. And as for the second, Carl Schmitt certainly gave over a period of some three years a very good imitation of being a devotee. I am afraid there was more than a touch of naivety in the notion that a man of "high culture" (*homme de haute culture* or, as the Germans say, *hohe Bildung*) could never bring himself to give personal support to a beastly and bloody despotism.

Culture and character have never been interchangeable.

[3] One could note that Walter Benjamin corresponded with him and wrote an essay about his theories before 1933. So did Hugo Ball, the co-founder of Dadaism. After the War the Left-liberal critic Rolf Schroers wrote a book, *Der Partisan*, inspired by Schmitt. One most interesting recent publication, edited by Jacob Taubes, is *Der Fürst dieser Welt: Carl Schmitt und die Folgen* (Paderborn, 1983).

[4] "If", Schmitt's quoted remark on this subject runs:

> "If I were the grave-digger, then the Republic must have already died, or someone else must have done her in. . . ."

Something less, surely, than a "total" clarification of the issue.

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Moscow as a Paper Tiger

WESTERN VIEWS OF the USSR since 1917, and of other Communist systems since 1945, seem to come round again with the monotonous regularity of a video-tape loop. On Communist imperialism—or, *per contra*, Communist willingness for coexistence—optimism and pessimism constantly alternate. Since 1980, the USSR and Communism have been judged with some severity in the democratic countries—not only, as is sometimes said, by a few intellectual ex-Marxists, but also by the public in general. In France, this can be seen in the opinion polls on the "image of the Soviet Union." A majority in the West criticise the Communist system both as a failure in itself and as a threat to the rest of the world. Hence the support for a firm stand in negotiations with the East, despite the ardour of pacifist minorities.

Several recent signs, however, suggest that the pendulum is now beginning to swing the other way; anti-Sovietism may be *dépassé*, and going out of fashion again. Not that anyone seeks to rehabilitate the Communist system as an economic and social panacea: that task has become to difficult. Nor does anyone still champion the Soviet "peace-loving" professions: that too will no longer wash. No: the new argument claims that the USSR has become so weak that to fear it is quite unnecessary, if not rather absurd. The popularity of this thesis, which is not really very new—it was used in the past as a partial justification for *détente*—explains the welcome given to Régis Debray's recent book, *Les empires contre l'Europe* (Gallimard). He portrays the Soviet empire as inefficient and crumbling, and he tempts us in various ways towards a very rosy estimate of the East-West balance of power.

In fact, according to Régis Debray, "East and West are

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non-existent." The Atlantic group is "a world expanding", the Soviet group "a world contracting." How's that again? Has M. Debray been looking only at pre-War maps? or pre-1975 ones? By his account, the only imperialism to be feared is (here we go again) American imperialism (to which he also adds the conquering energy of Islam). Anyone still obsessed by Soviet power, it seems, is a victim of outworn Manichaeism. The perfidious power from across the Atlantic is "infiltrating European society": the clumsy Soviet power is "besieging it." To do him justice, Debray does not deny Soviet expansionism. He asserts, however, that the USSR lacks the means to achieve its ends. Soviet military might is pasteboard. The Americans—automatically suspect—produce "outrageously inflated" estimates of the Soviet nuclear or conventional arsenal, of the Soviet navy, or of the number of Soviet soldiers, all miserable weaklings. Expansion in Africa? A special initiative of Castro's, which Moscow couldn't restrain. The Sovietisation of Central Europe after 1945? Really a response to the will of the people: certainly not the spirit of conquest. The greatest danger for us Europeans, it seems, comes from . . . the *Reader's Digest*. Why? "It's because the Afghans have never read *Reader's Digest* and have remained themselves that they are able to fight against Mig 25s." In other words, the Russians represent a threat for Europe only because our spirits have been somehow sapped by their objective ally (*Reader's Digest*).

Turning to more concrete matters, Debray quotes as proof of American imperialism—the only true imperialism, according to him—the "fact" that US military spending has increased by 40% in three years. In reality, he has confused the Administration's requests to Congress with what it has actually secured. For the coming year, for example, it has obtained a zero increase—and in practice less than zero, since the figures finally voted by Congress will no doubt fail to match the pace of inflation. Ah, Debray would answer, quibbles about figures are less significant than "the decline of Communism", now on its last legs ideologically and politically. That may well be so; but, diplomatically and strategically, it's still alive and kicking.

RÉGIS DEBRAY IS NOT ALONE in his optimism about the supposed weakness of the USSR. He has a curious ally in—M. Raymond Barre. In a long statement in *Politique internationale* (No. 27, Spring 1985), the former Prime Minister "rejects the idea of the USSR as a Superpower", and so "finds it hard to imagine that the USSR is ready to take additional risks." The fact that, between 1975 and 1980, 100 million people have come under direct or indirect Soviet influence "is not the result of *détente*." What about Afghanistan? On that subject, he says, "one cannot limit oneself to brief and hasty judgments." The USSR had not planned its invasion; it was "caught up in a process beyond its control." M. Barre seems not to have noticed that this "process" resulted from a Soviet *coup d'état* which sought to impose a Communist government on Kabul, followed by the need to prop it up when the people rejected it. In his view—and it is astonishing that so intelligent a man should resort to this old bromide—"the USSR has always suffered from a siege mentality." Presumably it is showing this again today in its repeated ultimata to Pakistan, by which it no doubt feels suddenly "encircled." In plain terms, Gorbachev is demanding that Pakistan expel Afghan refugees and send them back to be massacred by the Red Army (whose delicate methods of repression in Afghanistan have just been revealed in a United Nations report).

What could be more surprising?—Régis Debray is a disciple, not of François Mitterrand, but of Raymond Barre! Disquieting rumours were already circulating about the former Prime Minister. In Switzerland one day, he was reported as saying that the Iron Curtain had disappeared. In Brittany, he apparently reproached the President for "combining the traditional vices of French policy—Atlanticism and anti-Sovietism." M. Barre is too good a politician to attribute any sense to these abstractions. Is "anti-Sovietism" the reason why people regard the USSR as imperialist? Or does one become anti-Soviet because the USSR behaves in an imperialist way? Pure scholasticism: and the way out is to look at the facts. Have arms limitation agreements slowed down the Soviet military build-up—yes or no? Do Warsaw Pact troops possess chemical weapons—yes or no? And what of NATO's troops? For the past ten years, have the Soviets shown that they respect their Helsinki promises on human rights?

Raymond Barre merely says: "We must see to it that the commitments undertaken in Basket 3 are respected, and continually recall what they are." Dazzled by the decade-long success of this bold policy, one may well ask what concrete meaning M. Barre attaches to the words "We must see to it that. . . ." Again, is it "simple Manichaeism" that puzzles the reader when M. Barre (who knows English perfectly well) declares (on page 8) that he wants *détente* to be "indivisible"—and (on page 17) that he is opposed to "linkage"? In both languages, the two words mean the same: e.g., that the USSR cannot simultaneously pursue *détente* in Europe and destabilisation in the Near East, in Africa, in Latin America, and in Central Asia. So, in the end, what should we do? Close our eyes? Or react? And if so, how? Or should we simply decree that the danger is really, after all, quite imaginary?

AS FOR "Atlanticism"—if one's against it, ought one to leave the Alliance? Playing straight, Debray faces that crucial question. Should France quit the Atlantic Pact? Against all his argument's logic, he answers No. Yet why stay, if the USSR is no longer a threat? It seems strange to produce a theoretical analysis pointing in one direction, then draw practical conclusions which point the other way. According to M. Barre, the Alliance is based on a copybook maxim: the Americans defend Europe (he contends) because it is in their own interest to do so. But if defence has become superfluous, why do we allow America to go on providing it, when all it does is irritate the peace-loving Soviets? Any member state, after all, can quit the Pact when it pleases, leaving either its integrated command or the alliance itself.

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For this reason it's hard to see why the Spaniards, for example, demonstrate "against Reagan" instead of against each other. Spanish membership of NATO was approved in 1982 by a Parliament elected by universal suffrage. What one majority had done, another could undo—but has taken good care not to. Nor has it called membership in question by referendum. Now the Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez has obviously changed his mind: he wants to remain within the Alliance. Shouldn't Spaniards who disagree take their case to him?

WHAT IS REMARKABLE about European attitudes is how little they reflect real facts, and how much they stem from our own psychological needs. Among "experts", attitudes seem to change like skirt-lengths: one must have a little novelty number for the next meeting. Among politicians, attitudes often derive from the fear of having to draw conclusions from facts—facts like the extent of Soviet spying, revealed in 1983, when a corner of the veil was lifted, and 47 spies were expelled. Equally taboo, for the most part, is the Soviet role in international terrorism. Many statesmen prefer to turn aside from the danger, to avoid looking it in the face and doing something about it. How often our theories (can it always be by chance?) seem to encourage inertia! Régis Debray, for example, is right to point out the rude pressures from Islam, but wrong to fancy that they eclipse Communist expansionism. The "two forms of imperialism" don't cancel each other out: they add to one another—as can be seen in Lebanon, Chad, and the Yemen. There may be surprises in Iran, too, when Ayatollah Khomeini goes. The tacit anti-Western alliance of Islam and Communism works very well, so long as the USSR does not try to impose by force, as in Afghanistan, a régime modelled on its own.

It is always easier to see the Soviet Union as we should wish it than to adjust our policies to what it is. When M. Barre declares that "*La France doit avoir une politique étrangère qui couvre l'Est et l'Ouest*", he is stating the obvious. The only interesting question is what he means by "covering the East." It would be perilous indeed if it meant swallowing the most optimistic theses about the USSR.

The real point of denying the problem is, as with Régis Debray, to avoid having to try to solve it.

Dilucidación

Si señor, sure we har claiming the
bomb as Glorious Blow by
  Forces of Liberate Dark
  Dictate Oppression. Too long

far have we, fathers and hrandfathers
forced to Slavery lifes hwich
  Army of Liberate fight
  struggles till all mens are dead!

Down with the generalísimo!
(not the present or last hwon,
  only the hwon pefore last),
  Viva la Muerte!, señor,

Viva el excelentísimo
Señor conde de Torre-
  gamberro! Yes sirs my friend,
  what is the matter that some

dies for the Cause of the hwons that is
thinking right in this matters?
  This she's Political's War.
  Sure what are some person lifes?

We not Guerrillas amigo but
Counter-Anti-Guerrilla
  them was our Leaders but now—
  those is our Enemy, si,

ow you say por favor now they has
showed False Ideologics.
  Terrorist Actions too bad;
  this why we take such Campaigns!

This very Positive Actions she
may have kill some who have no
  doings with Rebels but so?
  Bombs she not go off for fun.

Don't say amigo you not with the
understandings of why we
  fights in montañas of South?
  This are the struggles to death!

OK so 20 am dead and some
shrapnels goes to some peoples—
  we har of People's own blood!
  This is of why we shall fight!

Last bomb was not our bomb *that* was bomb
blown hwen Traitor who carries
  gets it hexplosure too soon
  killing himself and some mans.

Somehow you get mix up, señor, you
see we Neutral in all thing
  this hwy the reasons hwe fights!
  Freedoms to Govermans Farce!

Same Costa Rica but also with
Nicaraguan Border!
  Now you mus hunderstand well
  which why this bombs must hexplode.

Peter Reading

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Perfection of the Life

E. M. Forster's Letters—By K. W. GRANSDEN

IN 1923 FORSTER wrote to Siegfried Sassoon about *A Passage to India*, with which he was having difficulties: "I shall never write another novel after it—my patience with ordinary people has given out. But I shall go on writing. I don't feel any decline in my 'powers'."

He was as good as his word. He wrote far more books after 1923 than before it, but never another novel. But the explanation he offers there needs to be taken together with another, earlier comment to Sassoon (2 May 1918) *à propos* a short story:

> "It's not that I'm off writing, but I can't any more put words between inverted commas and join them together with 'said' and an imaginary proper name."

How completely characteristic of this "elusive" writer (as the critics used never to tire of labelling him) to provide us with two theories of why he got stuck with fiction, one technical, one social or psychological. Of the two, the socio-psychological one will perhaps most astonish the reader of these letters[1] (when a craftsman gives a technical reason why he can't do something the layman has virtually no choice but to accept it). But no more patience with ordinary people? It might, I suppose, be said that the wide circle of friends and relations fortunate enough to be recipients of these letters do not constitute, by any definition of the term, "ordinary" people. One's friends are never ordinary, and it can be said of Forster, more than of most people, that he conferred distinction upon even his most distinguished friends by virtue of his friendship ("Human beings can't be dull if I find them interesting . . .").

Nor are the addressees represented in these two volumes exclusively, or even predominantly, drawn from the ranks of the famous and the public (though in Vol. 2 there are inevitably more of these). His most self-revealing letters are arguably those to his mother, Florence Barger, and Bob Buckingham (the last-named does not appear at all until Vol. 2). There are also far more of these personal letters, though statistics must be handled, as ever, with care. Out of an estimated 15,000 letters written during his lifetime the editors have found room for just 446.

He had, of course, what most of us now lack—time. Though always busy, he never had a regular nine-to-five job, and he was able through his correspondence not only to give pleasure to those he wrote to, and now to us, but to explore ways of working out his own problems and stresses whether in life or art. Even if the selection here provided represents only about one-thirtieth of his estimated epistolary output, it reflects adequately, thanks to careful and experienced editing, Forster's extraordinary life-span, 86 years from the first letter to the last.

Many of the earliest letters are to his mother, and one catches something of the tone of anxious hypochondria (his own health improved steadily as he grew older, as not infrequently happens, and his mother too lived to ninety) which we find also in the relationship between Rickie and his mother in *The Longest Journey*: and something else, not physical:

> "My cold is much better, nearly well, so is my cough . . . but I feel very nervous somehow. I don't know why it is, perhaps it is excitement, but lately I have always been taking the dark side of things. I have never been like it before, but it is not at all nice. . . . It is not so bad in the day time as at night, then I cry a lot. I also have a kind of foreboding that something dreadful will happen before the holidays. . . . The worst of school is, you have nothing and nobody to love, if only I had somebody. . . ."

That *cri de coeur* of 1890 (letter 12) expresses in the simplest possible terms a life's quest, but it is seldom in the early letters that his guard is down, and when it is, the result is not self-pity but the sharpness of truth. But the mutual concern for health and welfare continues through the Cambridge years and beyond ("I often wonder about your rheumatism, but feel sure you will never let me know if it is bad, in case of worrying me", he writes, at the start of a long and brilliant description of a visit to Peshawar, 12 November 1912, and examples could be multiplied). The early letters

[1] *Selected Letters of E. M. Forster.* Edited by MARY LAGO and P. N. FURBANK. Vol. I, 1879-1920. Collins (1983), £15.95. Vol. II, 1921-1970. Collins (1985), £17.50.

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begin also to reflect the eye for the telling and off-beat detail which marks the budding novelist, such as the description of Lord Kitchener getting an honorary degree and looking "rather a chaw-bacon in a grey suit which even I knew was not a proper fit." The self-mockery, too, is characteristic. This account of a breakfast party at King's is pure *Longest Journey*:

> "My breakfast party today was rather a fiasco, owing to tiresome Mollison. I was going to have him alone, when he very stupidly said before Worters and MacMunn that it would be much better if all three came to him instead. Of course I had to persist and include them in the invitation though I didn't want them and had no occasion to ask them. That was bad enough, but if you please the next thing is that Mollison can't come, because he has an invitation from the dean whom he has so often refused that he doesn't like to do it again. I felt very cross but being 'such a lady' behaved in an exemplary manner, being left with the two I didn't want and without the one I did."

And there is the undergraduate rag which turned into a riot, observed and enjoyed from a safe and decorous distance—"very foolish, but I much enjoyed it, for I saw it from my window beautifully." That Jamesian adverb seems very much the *mot juste* in the years of innocence, and from these gentle exploratory beginnings we can trace the slow building of Forster's character and personality so that by the time of the Second World War we are in the presence of a steadfast and experienced strength which is genuinely heroic and the more impressive because some of the material from the First World War has not worn anything like so well.

In 1914 he was riding the crest of the wave, back from India with half his recalcitrant masterpiece written, a fully-fledged literary figure whose four published novels were widely praised—only Bob Trevelyan noticed, correctly I think, a streak of facetiousness in *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, a perception which troubled its author—but not yet a national, let alone an international figure, as he and J. B. Priestley were to become later, not yet a "spokesman" for the arts and for liberal principles. We see him in 1914 as part of a coterie of artistic relationships, of the kind which later gave Bloomsbury a bad name in some circles. This nexus had begun to jell, ironically enough, at precisely that moment in history when all such coteries were threatened, perhaps irrevocably. "I simply don't know where this war will leave us all. There's bound to be some queer regrouping", he wrote to Hilton Young in February 1915 (letter 142): Young had been posted to Scapa Flow, and Forster's letter is full of his quarrels with D. H. Lawrence and suchlike literary small change.

I WANT TO INSERT HERE a lexical footnote. Forster was much addicted in his early years to the word "queer", long before it began to carry the popular meaning now transferred to "gay": he used it to mean anything odd, offbeat or unorthodox; it is occasionally pejorative, e.g. "a queer unsatisfactory emotionalism", occasionally inexplicit, "I have just been to Cambridge, but find it rather queer", where the "but" presumably signifies some such ellipse as "didn't feel at home." A particularly interesting example: a relative "reminded me of Uncle Willie, only queerer", for Uncle Willie was a model for Mrs Failing in *The Longest Journey*. In the famous thirteenth chapter of that novel, Forster writes of Mrs Failing that Rickie "had never known her so queer before." It is the moment of Aunt Emily's revelation to Rickie about his brother.

Uncle Willie is a shadowy, almost non-existent figure in the letters, but we learn of his literary significance from the splendid new Abinger edition of *The Longest Journey*.[2] This includes among its appendices not only the discarded fantasy chapter to which Forster refers in his preface to the 1961 World Classics edition of the novel, but also a memoir, "My Uncle Willie" (c. 1920), which identifies his home in Northumberland, where Forster passed some rather unhappy childhood visits, as the model for Cadover. Uncle Willie, unlike Auden's Uncle Henry, was not queer in the modern sense of the word, though sex evidently played an important part in his life. He lived in a *ménage à trois* with his wife (who actually was called Aunt Emily) and a younger lady called Leo. After his death, the two women set up house together, and on Aunt Emily's death Leo inherited almost everything, apart from some generous legacies to Forster's cousins. "And I got nothing at all. . . . Was I merely the wrong age and sex? Anyhow, no one seems to have quarrelled with Uncle Willie as completely as I have."

BUT LET US RETURN to the letters. There is perhaps something a bit disconcerting in reliving the tea-party, National Gallery lives of the Stracheys and Lawrences during the great slaughter on the western front, and it is with relief and excitement that we reach November 1915 and Forster's departure for Alexandria and war service with the Red Cross: a relief and excitement we sense also in himself, for despite his love for his mother he was aware that he needed to get away from her influence, something he had not really managed even on the first Indian journey of 1912-13. It was Alexandria that gave him his first real and intense experience of physical love, with an Egyptian tram-conductor, Mohammed el Adl.

Here was something of transcendent value and importance to him that could not be "tea-tabled" (to use Isherwood's term, coined in *Lions and Shadows*, to describe Forster's technique of "playing down") into the kind of amusing letters to his mother which even India had continued to call forth. He turned instead to another confidante, Mrs Florence Barger, to whom he remained very close for many years. In March 1915 he offered her *Maurice* to read ("to you it will reveal a new and painful world"); two years later he invited her again into that world, not through fiction but through his own life. In an interesting note to letter 256, citing an unpublished letter of 9 August 1929 to W. J. H. Sprott ("my relation to her is queer"), we learn that Forster ceased to

[2] *The Longest Journey*. By E. M. FORSTER. Edited by ELIZABETH HEINE. Abinger Edition, Vol. 2. Edward Arnold, £37.50.

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confide in Mrs Barger after Mohammed's death. Perhaps he no longer needed to, though his own explanation, that "she made something sacred and permanent for herself of this which fresh confidences would disturb", seems a characteristic novelist's comment—the life divided into chapters.

Forster's letters to Mrs Barger about el Adl are among the most remarkable in this collection. But it was not only about his love-affair that he confided in her at this time, but also about his relation with his mother, another sensitive area where frankness was difficult for him.

> "It isn't even as if I make mother happy by stopping [the date is 10 August 1915]—she is always wanting me to be 5 years old again, so happiness is obviously impossible for her, and she never realises that the cardinal fact in my life is my writing, and that at present I am not writing. (She knows I am not writing but she can't realise it is serious for me.)"

In this same letter (149) Forster also confesses another important element in his emotional life. "I've also got to chronicle to you, not to anyone else I think, that Hugh can't again be in my life what he has been"—a reference to his friend and fellow-Kingsman H. O. Meredith, on whom he drew for the character of Clive in *Maurice* and on whom his emotional life had hitherto been romantically centred. Three months later he was in Alexandria, though it was not until 1917 that he met el Adl. Their relationship was of brief duration (Mohammed got a better job in Cairo, thanks largely to Forster's typically unselfish help, married, fell ill and out of work, and died in 1922) and cannot have been easy for either of them.

> "Its drawback is that it's an understanding rather than an agreement. Its strong point is that it's a very perfect understanding, such as may pass into agreement at any moment, for the physical basis for an agreement does, on both sides, exist. If this should come I shall know perfection, if it doesn't I shall yet have been happy and achieved much intimacy. . . . It seems to me that to be trusted, and to be trusted across the barriers of income, race and class, is the greatest reward a man can receive, and that even if the agreement is not attained . . . even if he goes to Cairo and forgets me, I shall not have failed; and that other people are winning similar victories elsewhere; you and I, too, are winning one."
>
> Letter 171, 18 July 1917

In a later letter (178, 8 October 1917) he writes to Mrs Barger again:

> "I wish I was writing the second half of *Maurice* now. I now know so much more. It is awful to think of the thousands who go through youth without ever knowing. I have known in a way before but never like this. My luck has been amazing."

IT IS THROUGH the letters to Mrs Barger that one can follow this story, and it reads as vividly as any of Forster's fictions, and more strangely. "The greatest thing is over"? Not quite,

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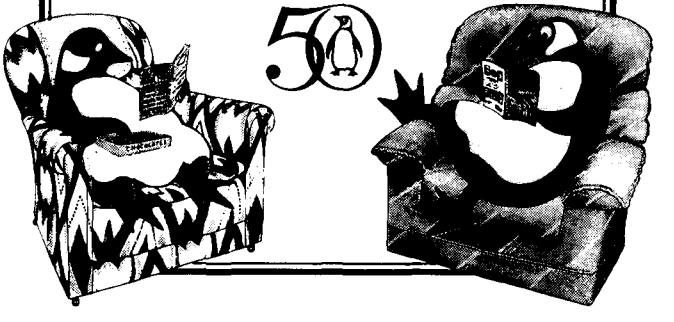

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for he was to know close personal involvement again, many years later and in very different circumstances, and for the rest of his life, though there too the course of true love did not always run smooth (does it ever?), but perhaps never again does the simple delight and gratitude in that first encounter find expression. "We had four perfect hours together", he wrote on 17 March 1921 (he had made a brief return to Egypt to see his friend before he died). The last letters in the story are very moving. "I tell you, as always, what is in my heart", he wrote (18 January 1922). "Mohammed collapsed under consumption about a fortnight before I landed, and though he is rallying from this particular attack I know that I see him for the last time. . . . These things are not sad really—there is incidentally some tears and indignation but neither form part of the central truth."

Perhaps the greatest victory Forster himself records in this letter is to be found in the words "I have been writing a certain amount of it [the news about Mohammed] to mother." To have mentioned him to her at all must have constituted a psychological breakthrough, and it is interesting to turn back one letter, to No. 214, written to his mother on board the ship which was taking him back to Alexandria and his dying friend, and to find there one bald sentence: "We reach Port Said a day earlier than expected, so I don't know whether Mohammed, who says he will meet me, will succeed." This letter is dated just six days before the letter to Mrs Barger quoted above, and if this sentence indeed represents the extent to which he felt able to confide in his mother, then it is clear how much he needed Mrs Barger. (There may of course have been another letter to his mother during those six days which is not selected here or has not survived.)

The editors print just two more letters from that time, in the second of which (217) the creative writer rises to the highest level of consolatory insight:

> "Ah me—but everything is bearable, it is the betrayal from within that wears away one's soul and I have been spared that. Happiness in the ordinary sense is not what one needs in life, though one is right to aim at it. The true satisfaction is to come through and see those whom one loves come through."

That last sentence seems to bring Forster close to the novelist whom among all his contemporaries he admired most—D. H. Lawrence.

In 1922, AFTER HIS BRIEF SOJOURN in Egypt, Forster returned to England from his second Indian journey, and settled down for the rest of his life (apart from holidays and literary excursions), partly in Surrey, partly in London, and in his later years in Cambridge. He plunged into the writing of short stories, into the laborious but ultimately triumphant issue of *A Passage to India*, and into the literary world. Having been a minor satellite, he became now one of its chief luminaries. As might be anticipated, the literary correspondence begins to proliferate, not now restricted only to the Cambridge-Bloomsbury axis of earlier years, but including Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon, Cavafy, and T. E. Lawrence, whose acute criticism of "The Life to Come" is preserved in an editorial footnote—Lawrence at first found it merely funny, though he thought "Dr Woolacott" "the most powerful thing I've ever read." There are a couple of respectful notes to A. E. Housman, to thank him for *Last Poems*, which he had evidently bought, not been given, and to accompany his own gift of a copy of *The Eternal Moment*, which elicited a response from Housman "so absolutely hateful" that Forster destroyed it. There is a crack at Hugh Walpole, whose habit of dedicating his books, without prior permission, to those more distinguished than himself, was notorious, though elsewhere he writes to him affably, even respectfully—"your much greater reputation." The artist must be many things to many men.

In the 1920s and early '30s a whole new set of friendships began, first and most notably with J. R. Ackerley, who followed Forster into a private secretaryship with a Maharajah and whose letters from India "were a godsend to my etiolated novel. I copied in pages and it became ripe for publication promptly." (Researchers please note. For the text of one such letter see *The Letters of J. R. Ackerley*, pp. 6-10.) In this connection, some of the letters of Forster to his mother from 1912-13, supplementing those in *The Hill of Devi*, provide valuable source-material for *A Passage to India*, particularly that of 29 January 1913 (letter 119), describing a visit to the Barabar caves:

> "But breakfast—mockery of a name—was not ready, and it was suggested we should visit the Buddhist caves while it was cooking. . . . The caves are cut out of the solid granite: a small square doorway and an oval hall inside. This sounds dull but the granite has been so splendidly polished. . . . We lit candles which showed the grain of the granite and its reds and greys . . . also tried to wake the echoes but whatever was said the cave returned only a dignified roar. We saw seven of them, but no, breakfast was *not* ready when we returned."

What a transformation awaited this light and deflationary travelogue—into the terrifying, annihilating BOUM of the novel!

And still the letters to his mother went on, a continuous outpouring of carefully tailored entertainment, solicitude, gossip and reportage. Some of the best and liveliest letters in the selection are written to her. One may be singled out here from the 1920s, an account of tea with Hardy, remarkable for its graphic vividness and its novelist's trick of catching character and tone of voice in speech.

> "Simple almost dull tea at the Hardys—nice food and straggling talk. I am to lunch here tomorrow 'but the cook only came today I don't know what it will be like' says Mrs H. gloomily, and then we proceed to a performance of Midsummer Night's Dream in the rectory garden of which likewise little is expected. T. H. showed me the graves of his pets, all overgrown with ivy, their names on the headstones. Such a dolorous muddle. 'This is Snowball—she was run over by a train . . . this is Pella, the same thing happened to her . . . this is Kitkin, she was cut clean in two, clean in two—' 'How is it that so many of your cats

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have been run over, Mr Hardy? Is the railway near?' 'Not at all near, not at all near—I don't know how it is. But of course we have only buried those pets whose bodies were recovered. Many were never seen again.' I could scarcely keep grave—it was like a caricature of his own novels or poems. We stumbled about in the ivy and squeezed between the spindly trees over 'graves of ancient Romans' he informed me: 'sometimes we are obliged to disturb one.' He seemed cheerful, his main dread being interviews, American ladies and the charabancs that whirr past while the conductor shouts 'Ome of Thomas 'Ardy, Novelist.'"

Letter 223, 19 July 1922

THE PUBLICATION (in 1924) and immediate and continuing success of *A Passage to India* was the most important event in Forster's creative life, a fact he never ceased to recognise and be thankful for. His own comments on the novel are specially revealing for they face and anticipate the question all subsequent critics have had to address themselves to: does the book undermine/transcend the old G. E. Moore doctrine, proclaimed with such joyful certainty in *Howards End*—"personal relations are the life for ever and ever." Here is what he wrote to Malcolm Darling (15 September 1924, 248):

> "I have wondered . . . whether I have moved at all since King's. King's stands for personal relationships, and these still seem to me the most real things on the surface of the earth, but I have acquired a feeling that people must go away from each other (spiritually) every now and then, and improve themselves if the relationship is to develop or even endure. *A Passage to India* describes such a going away—preparatory to the next advance, which I am not capable of describing. It seems to me that individuals progress alternately by loneliness and intimacy, and that legend of the multiplied Krishna . . . serves as a symbol of a state where the two might be combined. The King's view oversimplified people: that I think was a defect. We are more complicated, also richer, than it knew, and affection grows more difficult than it used to, and also more glorious. Here again it occurs to me whether the above is not the philosophy of a bachelor. . . . There is no discounting one's experiences."

Despite the pains it cost its author, *A Passage to India* was well received (though "I hear the Govt. are upset about the sales . . . they did not mind until it sold. . . . I wonder whether they will ban it") and launched him for the first time into absolute rather than relative fame and fortune. At first he was bewildered and uncertain how to cope. "All this fame and money, which have so thrilled me when they come to others, leave me cold when they came to me. I am not an ascetic, but I don't know what to do with them, and my daily life has never been so trying, and there is no one to fill it emotionally" (251). By now one can guess the recipient: Florence Barger, to whom he continued to confide his problems with his mother, compounded now by the need to

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decide where the two of them should live (they moved in 1924 from a rented villa in Weybridge which sounds like something out of *A Room with a View*, to West Hackhurst, the house designed by his father and bequeathed to him by his Aunt Laura).

The year 1924 was important for him, not only because it was the year of *A Passage to India*, but because in that year, as he wrote to Mrs Barger, he decided that he was "going to have two rooms in town", and from then until he got too old to manage, he always maintained a flat in London, whither he could escape for a couple of nights from his almost entirely female family to see his friends. Now his life proliferated into the various activities of a famous author: the Clark Lectures at Cambridge (*Aspects of the Novel*), much reviewing and criticism for Ackerley at *The Listener* (a periodical to which, I have cause to remember with gratitude, he remained loyal after Ackerley's retirement).

There were important new friendships, too, with a new generation of writers for whom he was a literary as well as a personal guru, notably Christopher Isherwood, whom he addressed by his surname for at least eighteen months and to whom he sent, in a letter dated 4 July 1937, his famous parody of Landor (324):

> *I strove with none for none was worth my strife,*
> *Reason I loved, and next to reason, doubt,*
> *I warmed both hands before the fire of life*
> *And put it out.*

An earlier letter to Isherwood (319) includes an acute critique of *The Ascent of F6*, the first night of which Forster had attended ("the Abbot—the finest scene in the play . . . the mother-business . . . doesn't work out as it should dramatically").

Of his emotional friendships, that with Bob Buckingham was much the most important. It survived many stresses and vicissitudes and grew always in strength, helped by Bob's remarkable wife. The Buckinghams provided him with a family: he responded to and shared in their tragedies, especially the death of their only son Robin of Hodgkin's disease. In the same letter to Isherwood which contains the Landor parody, he wrote.

> "I have also been considering what has been most satisfactory in my own life, and ruling out Bob on the ground that he is not in a cheap edition, I have come to the conclusion that it is the *Passage to India*. It is amazing luck that one's best book should be the widest read and the one most likely to do good."

In the letters to Bob one can see Forster struggling with his own possessiveness. He praised the virtues of courage and unpossessiveness but like most of us did not always find it easy to practise what he preached: "If you call living a full life seeing me once a fortnight I don't. . . ."

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As he grew more confident of himself and his influence, the letters become more authoritative. His work in the Second World War was war service of a different kind from that undertaken in Alexandria. Now he involved himself passionately in the crusade against Nazism. He spoke at meetings of the National Council for Civil Liberties, he criticised the BBC "over the victimisation of private opinions" (there was a move to ban from the air those who had expressed or were believed to have held pacifist or communist views, and in a letter to the Director-General he made it clear both that he objected to this censorship and that he himself did not share these views and believed in going on with the war). He represented Britain at P.E.N. conferences and had the wit and courage to shout "Art for Art's sake?", and then, when everyone had satisfactorily misinterpreted the scorn in his voice, "I should just think so."

The tenacity with which he maintained the rights of minorities, the private voice in the public place, shines through the long years of the second darkness with an exemplary light. He too now enjoyed his finest hour. He never let bureaucracy get away with muddle, discourtesy, prejudice or bad taste. (Long before the War, he had declined a seat on the council of the Society of Authors because he felt it had prevaricated over the prosecution of *The Well of Loneliness*, and had taken issue with the International P.E.N. over a proposal to organise a cruise to Skyros to unveil a monument to Rupert Brooke.)

After the War his life changed again. In 1945 his mother died and in the following year he was evicted from West Hackhurst, a discreditable episode which elicited one of his sharpest business letters. (How times, incidentally, have

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changed, and how surprising it seems to us today that a man of such wealth should never have bought a freehold.)

> "You are good enough to commend me for being helpful, and there seemed no reason to be otherwise, once I had decided to accept notice. But this does not make me the less critical of your action. With your tradition and social standing you should not have deprived me of my home. It is unlikely that you and Miss Farrer are interested in my opinion, or in local opinion. Still you will agree that it is unusual in civilised circles to turn out a tenant when his age is sixty-seven, when houses are unobtainable, and when the house he leaves was designed by his father."
>
> Letter 378

The sequel is well known. King's College came to the rescue, and offered him the rooms where he was to make a home for the remainder of his life, and where I, along with so many other undergraduates, first had the chance to meet him. From this new base he set out on fresh enterprises. He visited America for the first time, and collaborated with Eric Crozier to produce the libretto for *Billy Budd*, an undertaking not without its difficulties, as we learn from a letter to Benjamin Britten (394) and from a letter of Crozier's printed by the editors as a footnote ("E. M. F. did not realise Britten's sensitiveness about criticism of work in progress"). Over *Maurice* he continued to dither—it is clear from two letters to Isherwood (330, 384) that he was thinking about publication in 1938 and again in 1948, "but the objections are formidable." Meanwhile, he entered the theatre as well as the opera house. Santha Rama Rau adapted *A Passage to India* for the stage, while Wilfred Stone, writing his study of the novelist, *The Cave and the Mountain*, elicited some valuable reminiscences of the Cambridge years. "He [Nathanael Wedd] was certainly the leading influence on me when I was an undergraduate and a permanent one since" (letter 434). How far away, now, seems that early letter to Wedd—"Dear Mr Wedd, I have finished all the Latin you suggested, except the last two books of the *De Natura Deorum*, which I have been unable to get hold of."

So long a life, perhaps like other very long lives, seems indeed to come full circle as it draws towards its close. For me, the strangest moment in reading these pages came when I reached letter 421 (16 July 1958):

> "If there seems time I want to tell you of a strong experience or rather re-experience that I have just had. I am destroying or rearranging letters and came across those from Mohammed el Adl—I may not even have mentioned his name to you, he was a tram-conductor whom I met in Alexandria 1917-1919, and again saw in 1922, soon before his death. I assumed the letters would be nothing much, but gave a glance before destroying them, and was amazed—all the things I most adore glimmering in them. He had gone underground in the interval, and there is no doubt that a little of him re-emerged in Cocoa. They have given me the oddest feeling. . . ."

The reader shares that odd feeling, for the addressee of this letter, to whom Forster cannot be sure he ever mentioned el Adl, is P. N. Furbank, co-editor of the letters and Forster's appointed biographer. The greatest thing is indeed over. It is almost as if el Adl has become an invention of Forster's in the same way as Cocoa (a character who first appeared in the *Entrance to an Unwritten Novel* and reappeared in the story "The Other Boat") is an invention. Of course we know perfectly well he existed, and can in an instant turn the calendar back forty years to those letters to Mrs Barger and prove it, but the sheer length of Forster's life, the (studiedly?) casual reference, the Proustian sense of rediscovering by recreating time lost, all conspire to suggest the fiction that el Adl was himself a fiction.

Moreover, throughout these volumes there is a curious and recurring sense of *déjà vu* as we read of journeys and places which were to become part of the novels—and not just in the most obvious case, that of *A Passage to India*, where *The Hill of Devi* has already provided the opportunity to compare the "real thing" with the truer fictional version. Thus, in the accounts of a visit with his mother to Italy in 1901-2 we get pre-echoes of the Lucy novel:

> "We have been here three days, and very comfortable, but my mother hankers after an Arno view and a South aspect, so we are not stopping. . . .
>
> The elderly ladies of the hotel make midnight excursions in the well-lighted streets in search of blood and adventure, and come back breathing desolation and woe.

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> The exalted level is sustained by an old lady who is understood to be waiting for an inspiration to write a book, and an old lady who had really written one, which was squashed by the landslip at Amalfi."

And in 1905 he went to Germany to act as tutor to the children of the novelist who called herself "Elizabeth" (Countess von Arnim). The letters describing this visit show Forster at his most delightful: clearly he was having a lot of fun, away from the family, popular and successful socially, shopping, sightseeing, picnicking, dancing, at his most sociable and *bürgerlich*. The German connection was to provide him with some of the background and tone of his most sociable and *gemütlich* fiction, *Howards End*, and also, in Elizabeth herself, yet another model for the complicated Mrs Failing. It was while Forster was in Germany that he was beginning work on *The Longest Journey*, the least *bürgerlich*, most imaginatively symbolist of his novels. It was there, too, that he saw Wagner's *Siegfried*, whose hero, another child of nature, provided a model for Stephen—he was indeed at one time to have been called after him, according to the 1961 Introduction, though the only other name which survives in the early drafts is the somewhat less heroic Harold. But the published letters are tantalisingly silent about the early gestation of *The Longest Journey*. No reference to it occurs in the letters selected from the period of the German visit. However, the Abinger introduction quotes a letter written by Forster to his mother from Germany on 18 August 1905: "Should I ever write another book it will be called *The Longest Journey*, and the one after that *Windy Corner*."

THUS THE READER MAY CREATE through these letters the most fascinating of Forster's unwritten novels, a kind of do-it-yourself construction kit for a *roman à clef*. If he really gave up fictional narrative because "it's not that I'm off writing but I can't any more put words between inverted commas and join them together with 'said' and an imaginary proper name", then perhaps these letters constitute the formula whereby he "saved" a life as full of tragicomedy as any domestic novel and processed it into thousands of chapters and paragraphs which it is the reader's task and delight to assemble. It is a novel with a large cast of non-imaginary proper names, and with a many-voiced first-person narrator, Morgan, EMF, Pop(py): there is Lily's Pop(py)—Lily being herself a persona for Alice Clara, dearest mother—endlessly solicitous to comfort and amuse; Florence's Morgan, telling as always what is in his heart; official Forster, rebuking bureaucracy, telling Lord Annan that he cannot share his love of largeness ("I have a growing, perhaps ingrowing respect for smallness"); literary Forster, discussing Melville with Britten, new writing with Lehmann, Bridges with Spender; entrepreneurial Forster, promoting the work of Forrest Reid, Cavafy, Ackerley; erotic Forster, confiding his fantasies to chosen friends, T. E., Christopher, William, Joe, Bob.

Not only is there this multiplicity, but another process, not

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to do with the text, is going on invisibly while we read, for the man behind the personae is getting older page by page, year by year, in a world not of narrative but of real time, or rather perhaps of both: older, but also wiser, defter, cleverer simply, so that two processes coexist and coalesce, one reflecting the complexities of reader-controlled art, the other the inescapable processes of nature, the roll-call of the real dead, Robin Buckingham, Lily, Virginia, T. E. and D. H.—a process over which the reader is powerless, able only to glance uneasily at dates as he gets towards the end of the second volume. It is appropriate that the last letter selected here should be to May, devoted wife of Bob Buckingham and devoted friend, in whose house in Coventry, a few months after this, he died:

> "Silence cannot mean peace. Send me a line (All right here)."

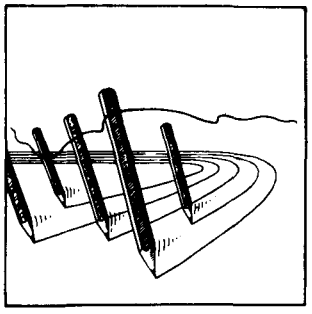
Pondering this enigmatic message (cry for attention?), which somehow seems so fitting a conclusion to these volumes, I found myself recalling some words from *A Passage to India*—"the perfectly adjusted organism would be silent." I looked the passage up (it is the beginning of Chapter XIV) and read this:

> "Most of life is so dull that there is nothing to be said about it, and the books and talk that would describe it as interesting are obliged to exaggerate, in the hope of justifying their own existence. Inside its cocoon of work or social obligation, the human spirit slumbers for the most part, registering the distinction between pleasure and pain, but not nearly as alert as we pretend. There are periods in the most thrilling day during which nothing happens, and though we continue to exclaim: 'I do enjoy myself,' or, 'I am horrified,' we are insincere. 'As far as I feel anything, it is enjoyment, horror'—it's no more than that really, and a perfectly adjusted organism would be silent."

Forster's letters seem to proclaim the contrary: that nothing in life is so dull that it cannot be made interesting by writing well about it, and that "silence cannot mean peace" unless it be the silence of the grave. We are grateful that the imperfectly adjusted organism called E. M. Forster went on talking and joking and confiding and entertaining until the end. Perhaps in this achievement of the human spirit the Yeatsian dilemma, "perfection of the life or of the work", is happily resolved.

Down Under with Waltzing Jane

Australia in Fiction—By D. J. Taylor



"Pray remember", says a colonial pundit somewhere in *Jane Austen in Australia*, "that we are but a young country." You might think—for all that the author is intent upon one of those exercises in the historical subjunctive and hence entitled to latitude—that this is a little contrived, a small piece of self-consciousness over which the author and reader can exchange a wink. Yet meaningful remarks are strewn about the pages of all these books with deliberate artlessness. "No real mystery can be solved", reckons Darcy Burr in *The Doubleman*, while Herbert Badgery, the hero of *Illywhacker*, will feed you his opinions on truth and lies, reality and subterfuge, at the drop of a hat. After all, "it was no trouble to lie." No. This sort of revelation, symbolic games being given away, is quite deliberate. It is a hint in code to the reader, requiring only his own decoding, a warning about the likelihood of artifice and dissimulation. Forewarned, forearmed, we stride on into the text.

The gleeful acceptance of artifice is a central force at work in the modern novel. More advanced forms of critical theory demand that each book exist as its own meta-text, ceaselessly commenting on its own preoccupations and resolves, turning in on itself to demonstrate symbols and inconsistencies. This tricksiness, this feeling that you have broken in on the author's private codes, risen to a higher level of interpretation than he or she anticipated, can be stimulating. It can also make you pine for the staid satisfactions of pace and narrative; an assumption that the author, like you, is waiting breathlessly to see what will happen to his characters. Frequently in these modern fictions, assembled with nods in the direction of Derrida and the Yale critical school, the author is nothing much more than a puppetmaster who, masochistically, wants you to see the strings.

Australian fiction was always a likely candidate for this approach. Historical circumstance demands it. Peter Carey quotes as his epigraph remarks by Mark Twain on the confusing and downright implausible nature of much Australian history: presumably this can be taken as a defence of his own method, which is to write equally fanciful fiction. You can't after all, truthfully explain the inexplicable. Possibly these intentions have something to do with the current modishness of the Australian novel, a slap to insular sensibilities which thought that it began and ended with Patrick White. Other home-grown stars—Frank Moorhouse, for instance, who combined scrupulous realism with the odd stylistic flourish—never progressed beyond cult acceptance in this country. It would be difficult to describe any of these

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books as "realistic", such is the degree of resolute self-questioning. Here, as so often nowadays, you are in the realm of fable.

The fabulist at the centre of Peter Carey's *Illywhacker*[1] is 139-year-old Herbert Badgery, found reminiscing about a specious and eventful life. "Illywhacker" is demotic for confidence-man, a role Badgery gaily entertains from the moment in 1919 when his Morris Farman lands at Balliary East and introduces him to the entrancing Phoebe McGrath. A brief married idyll ends upon her elopement with Horace, the travelling poet. The novel then fast-forwards to 1931 when Badgery, seven years on the road with his precocious offspring, encounters Leah Goldstein, a dancer of obstinate virtue attempting to support her maimed husband. These are the tornado years. As Badgery and Goldstein Theatricals they traverse the 1930s "like flies on the face of a great painting" until Leah returns to her husband, while Badgery, his world falling apart, revisits his childhood mentor, the scrutable Goon Tse Ying, and abstracts his magical *Book Of the Dragon*.

With Herbert sentenced to ten years in Rankin Downs gaol, the novel's focus switches to 17-year-old Charles, "Snake Boy Badgery", and his role in the Great Victoria Mouse Plague. Deaf, cretinous, but likeable, he marries Emma, a teacher rescued from the saurian clutches of a Gould's Monitor. Charles and Emma establish a pet-shop in Sydney and everything prospers until the dreadful afternoon when Emma imagines that Charles has enlisted for war, and the lizard, blithely stepping to freedom from its cage, has a leg excised by an excited fox-terrier. It is a symbolic incident. Emma retreats into the cage and resists extraction, and in a period coincident with Herbert's return the fortunes of the Badgery family, *quondam* owners of the world's greatest pet emporium, go into irreversible decline.

THIS IS ONLY the most restrained summary of a vast, diffuse plot chock-full of luminous characters and incident, in whose arbitrary nature it is possible to detect unflinching ulterior motive. "Illywhacker" is Carey's metaphor for fiction, "a trickster, a ripperty man, a conman"—on one level the book can be interpreted as a debate about truth and the novel. Badgery contends that lies enliven. "You call it a lie. I call it a gift."

True or not (an irrelevant distinction, possibly), *Illywhacker* is a masterpiece of comic invention, a ragbag of unfocused events given connection and design by symbolic coat-pegs negligently distributed through the text: the snake, for instance, which makes a pivotal appearance early on. Badgery, determined to impress Phoebe, tells her that it's a pet, a deceit from which much ensues: making the point that in a fictional context lies can be fruitful. This is a comic novel, and something more. Rereading establishes the fact that Carey has constructed his narrative with beguiling artfulness, confronting the reader on the one hand with a sensation of stories falling off trees on either side of the path, each demanding investigation and comment, on the other a sneaky, manipulative continuity, a panoramic awareness of past and future contingency.

Carey's language is as enterprising as that of the stories contained in *The Fat Man In History*. An umbrella attack on Badgery's Morris Farman does no more damage than "a knife in water"; an old man's skin hangs from his arm "like a roast chicken wing." Form and content, dextrously interwoven, contrive to illumine an entire country. Watching Badgery's dealings with his canny, assured countrymen, noting his complaint that "the country is full of bloody salesmen", we can also speculate that "Illywhacker" is a metaphor for the Australian past. Traditionalists might deplore the obvious contrivance but *Illywhacker* is a dazzling and hilarious book.

PROFESSOR KARL MILLER has written on C. J. Koch's *The Doubleman*[2] in *The London Review of Books*, defining it as a text of romantic dualism. A more prosaic approach seems in order. Fatherless and crippled by polio, Richard Miller (on reflection one can forgive the Professor's insistence on the Manichean order of things) is growing up in post-war Tasmania. Paralysis is crucial in his introduction to the allegorical sub-world which the book extrapolates. Flat on his back, living life at one remove, he notes that "it was now that my interest in the other world began." This interest is reinforced by his encounter with the mysterious Broderick, a sort of Magus figure, who has a sinister familiar named Darcy Burr and who teaches Richard's cousin Brian to play the guitar. But Richard, after a sexual initiation at the hand of unfathomable Deirdre Brennan, decamps to Sydney in the hope of becoming an actor.

It is at this point that the book begins to lurch towards its disconcerting conclusion. Darcy and Brian reappear as Thomas and The Rhymers, a quaint folksy ensemble whose lyrics preach the occultism that enlivened Miller's childhood. And not just occultism. Among the tribe of hobmen, water sprites, bogles and various other fauna of the supernatural, there arises the notion of dualism. "Faery's double", Darcy tells Richard, and indeed reflection assures you that the book contains two of everyone, even Deirdre, whose death—and the splitting up of the group (rock groups are by nature fissiparous)—is the novel's finale.

Again the reader is enmeshed in a web of actuality and illusion, of things not being what they seem. The metaphor is music. "In complex music the melodies aren't there at the beginning just for what they are." Apparently not. The quest—for meaning, for one's true associates—is pervasive. "I can always find y' Dick" says Darcy, "there's nothing easier than finding people." I smell Jung. One's first reaction is to assume that this is meretricious tosh, but that would be to deny the book's obvious merit. It is an axiom that within every novel of ideas there is a decent realist fiction screaming to get out. In *The Doubleman* one can detect an interesting novel deflected from its proper path by this accretion of Darcy Burr's "ghost music", the story of a lonely adolescent, proceeding to struggling actor—amid the mincing old queens of the ABS drama department—finding fulfilment in success and marriage to Katrin. Mr Koch is capable of conjuring up

[1] *Illywhacker*. By PETER CAREY. Faber, £9.95.
[2] *The Doubleman*. By C. J. KOCH. Chatto & Windus. £8.95.

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sharp and ineradicable images, ranging in a few words over *Mitteleuropa*, when describing Katrin's ancestry, manifesting a keen awareness of the passing of time, a sense of people's lives slipping away, of youthful promise inadequately fulfilled. There is an oddly old-fashioned air hanging over *The Doubleman*. It is very much a book of the 1960s. Dope, tinsel, and misplaced enthusiasm combine to remind one what dull, fatuous years they were.

No doubt it is unfair to consider Barbara Ker Wilson in the same breath as Koch and Carey. Her aims are much more modest, though her execution of them is not despicable. Yet here is a further exercise in unreality, albeit belonging to a distinct and definable genre—the historical might-have-been. There have been a number of these books recently. T. C. Boyle's *Water Music*, which examined the career of Mungo Park, was a notably frothy example. The problem with what we might describe as exercises in the historical subjunctive is that they require the unforced suspension of belief. A self-conscious narrator, deliberately nudging the reader's sense of actuality, is death to a book about real people performing non-existent actions. *Jane Austen in Australia*[3] has its roots in history—the arrest and escape from deportation of an Austen aunt—but very little else. Uncle James Leigh-Perrott, having read up on the Antipodes in anticipation, resolves to undertake a pleasure trip. Jane, recovering from the apparent death of an admirer, journeys with them as a companion to her aunt. Predictably the visit, seeing that it never happened, is somewhat purposeless save that Jane conducts one or two discreet flirtations and, implausibly, meets her old flame—rumours of whose death were, as they say, greatly exaggerated.

On a moderate level this succeeds very agreeably. Jane has a pretty wit and the narrator allows herself some choice epigrams, remarking of the newly-wed Strongbows, "as if the novelty of marriage were not sufficient they intended to take up land in the colony and settle." However, the author (as is usual with this sort of thing) is unable to avoid a certain staginess. There are two perspectives at work here, the author's and that of her faked contemporary persona. Inevitably one perspective occasionally thwarts the other by anachronisms of phrase and place. It is contextually unfeasible to refer to a character as "mentally defective" or a continent as "undiscovered" (how can she *know*?). Rather in the same way, background details are too obviously worked into the main body of the text. When a servant unleashes a volley of authentic contemporary slang the effect is not plausibility but simply a realisation that the author has boned up on her social history. This is not one of those historical novels in which the *dramatis personae* storm around yelling "I' faith, thou saucy varlet", but the attempts at verisimilitude are a shade overdone.

These are minor quibbles. After all, not everybody is George Macdonald Fraser, whose Flashman novels—combining absolute authenticity with a casual acceptance of

[3] *Jane Austen in Australia*. By Barbara Ker Wilson. Secker & Warburg, £8.95.

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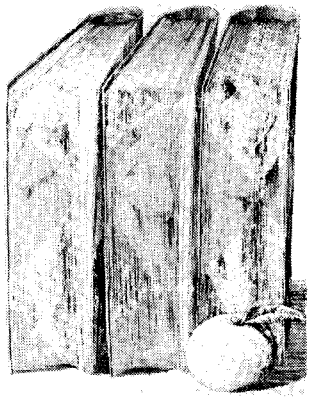
historical detail—represent the *ne plus ultra* of this particular genre. Naturally the colonial chapters, benefiting from the novelty of scene and incident, are the most convincing. Australia is presented as a ghastly parody of English society, a world in which the Governor is "not quite a gentleman" (Aunt Perrott swoops like a hawk on social shortcomings), Judge Advocates are carried away drunk to their carriages and young women subjected to the dreadful immorality of waltzing. What does Jane make of this? Very little, apart from a few tart remarks. From time to time she stumbles across copy fodder—despite the absence in her books of any character or incident drawn from life. There is even a Mr Wentworth whose name "might very well be mentioned" in the next novel. There is also Mr Crabtree, the sub-Wordsworthian versifier whose butterfly poems are quite properly made fun of. The whole farrago diverts and entertains and is a welcome antidote to less innocent essays in fictional artifice.

Et in Arcadia Ego

Demons in Neverland—By ROGER LEWIS



SUICIDES, RAPES, molestations, kinkynesses: the secret garden of *Secret Gardens*[1] is hardly an arcadia. What Humphrey Carpenter chronicles as the Golden Age of children's literature is, in fact, an arcade of sexual and emotional hurts. The charmed grove has a tangled and lubricious undergrowth—presided over by the cocky Peter Pan. Discussing the popular Victorian and Edwardian scribes who have bequeathed to us their sentimental visions, what Carpenter has trespassed upon (though he is not disposed fully to explore it) is an intimation of that late 19th-century invention: the unconscious. George MacDonald, reader of E. T. A. Hoffmann and Friedrich von Hardenberg, commented that fairy tales seemed like "narratives without coherence but . . . with associations like dreams." While England was landscaping its Neverlands, in Vienna psychoanalysis was being developed.

The idea of the mind as a dark forest of recondite symbols, a salad of wish-fulfilment and fictionalised memory, Freud spent a career examining; writers of children's literature spent careers providing covert case-histories. Freud was a therapist; writing children's literature is therapeutic—the form has, said MacDonald, "allegorical meaning in general, and an indirect effect like music." By passing off their tales as jottings for the nursery, artists could investigate their own mental experiences; pretending to entertain the innocent, they explored their own pleasure principles. The aquatic paradise of *The Water Babies*, for instance, was written by a man who told his wife, in high excitement, that he rose at night and "went into the woods . . . and lay naked upon thorns and when I came home my body was torn from head to foot." Charles Kingsley also composed *billets-doux* about copulation on crosses, transfixed nuns, priapic monks. He wanted Fanny Grenfell to preserve chastity for a moon after marriage, so that she will be his "virgin bride, a sister only." Fantasies about sibling incest are a recurring theme in 19th-century art, from Byron to an apotheosis in Wagner: "*Braut und Schwester bist du dem Bruder*", sings Siegmund to Sieglinde.

The Water Babies is a dream of death. The besmirched sweep, lustrated, wriggles free for post-mortem adventures as a slippy spirit. Alice, too, tours a wonderland which could be regarded as discarnate, posthumous. She falls down the rabbit-hole into the recesses of the earth; there, she grows and shrinks, "shutting up like a telescope", as Milton's Satan does in Pandemonium. Carroll, ruler of her universe, is Mr Hyde to Dodgson's Dr Jekyll. Doubles, as Carpenter says, pervade the *Alice* books: the Duchess and the Queen of Hearts; Tweedledum and Tweedledee; Logic and Nonsense; the looking-glass, which duplicates and distorts the world of those who look into it. In reality, however, it is Dodgson who is the sinister extension of the meek fabulist Carroll. He practised photography, Carpenter claims, "largely because it gave him a respectable way of picking up little girls." Alice Liddell, the most renowned lulu, daughter to the Dean of Christ Church, was but one of a horde. She was not the exclusive inspiration for her namesake. *Alice*, Dodgson told Tenniel, "has been read and liked by so many children." Reciting stories joined shutter-bugging as a procurative ploy. Dean Liddell penetrated the ruses. Leaves from Dodgson's diary for June 1863 are suspiciously missing. During that month he'd travelled alone with Lorina, Alice and Edith. What surreptitiousness occurred? There was a breach between the mathematics don and the Liddells afterwards.

Dodgson, it is argued, lusted after babes (he lost interest in his elvish pals once they reached puberty); Freud's discovery was that babes have lusts. The suckling at the breast is learning about sensation. Mother is the first lover. George MacDonald, a friend of Dodgson, whose work is haunted by the presence of his dead mother, in *Phantastes* and *Lilith* betrays a morbid curiosity about pain and torture. His bright-eyed infant heroes and heroines dispense punishments gleefully to malefactors. "The terrors of the imagination", he says, "were fast yielding to those of sensuous experience."

[1] *Secret Gardens: The Golden Age of Children's Literature.* By HUMPHREY CARPENTER. Allen & Unwin, £12.95.

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The whiplash of de Sade can be heard in the background; the moans of Sacher-Masoch come from the foreground. Aggressiveness and destructiveness Freud considered the two "primal instincts." And they are not found only in MacDonald. Louisa Alcott, before *Little Women* made her name, crafted the pulp *Pauline's Passion and Punishment*—an echo-chamber of the erotic.

Little Women occasions Carpenter's best chapter. He is eye-opening about its author. Louisa Alcott's father was an illywhacker, the founder of failed Transcendentalist covens; one such "was soon crammed with dietary reformers and assorted cranks, including a nudist." Her mother was mannish. Abigail, known as Abba (Aramaic for *father*) was the family wage-slave. Louisa emulated, and was attracted to, mature older men: perhaps a search for a surrogate papa, her own being emasculate? Jo, her alias in *Little Women*, marries an aged German professor. In real life, Louisa liked to write plays and cast herself in all the male roles. Thus, too, Jo, who "played male parts to her heart's content." The subtext of *Little Women* resembles a fantasy about Vita Sackville-West: the sexual virtuosity of Woolf's *Orlando*. Carpenter hints at lesbic incest. When Anna Alcott married John Pratt, "I moaned in private over my great loss", confessed Louisa; in *Little Women*, Meg is engaged to John Brooke, and Jo says "I just wish I could marry Meg myself, and keep her safe in the family."

According to anthropologists, the incest-taboo, the ban on endogamy, was instituted precisely to thwart such turning-in, such closed ranks. Exogamy promotes alliances, a social chain. Alcott's garden is secret: no new members are admitted.

Jo's supreme moment of masculinity comes when her family grows to depend upon her as its head; her own head, symbolically, is cropped: "I'm the man of the family now papa is away." Her short curls "will be boyish, becoming." As for Louisa, after the death of her mother, her father had a stroke which, says Carpenter, "confined him to bed and made it necessary for him to eat with a bib." The daughter had to mother her own father.

"Oh! my Daddy, my Daddy!" (reconciliation in *The Railway Children*); "Oh, my daddy! Oh, my daddy, my daddy!" (reconciliation in *The House of Arden*): E. Nesbit, who lost her father when she was aged three, makes the return of the absent parent a climax in her fiction. Kenneth Grahame, whose father abandoned his family and ran off to France, was not vexed by paternal deprivation. On the contrary, as Carpenter says, the son, instead of loathing this, admired the courage it took to flee from responsibilities. Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit, who has no hope of rediscovering an elder (his father "was put in a pie by Mrs McGregor"), is another zestful traveller. He slinks off to the forbidden garden, hoping for better fortune than his father had met with. In Potter's dainty world, every creature is a potential meal for some other creature. *Secret Gardens* interestingly discusses her work as anthropomorphic Jane Austen—and Potter's favourite novel was *Persuasion*. It is no surprise that the works made a successful ballet: her characters are nimble beaux and belles set in a Regency "time

HENRY KISSINGER

Observations

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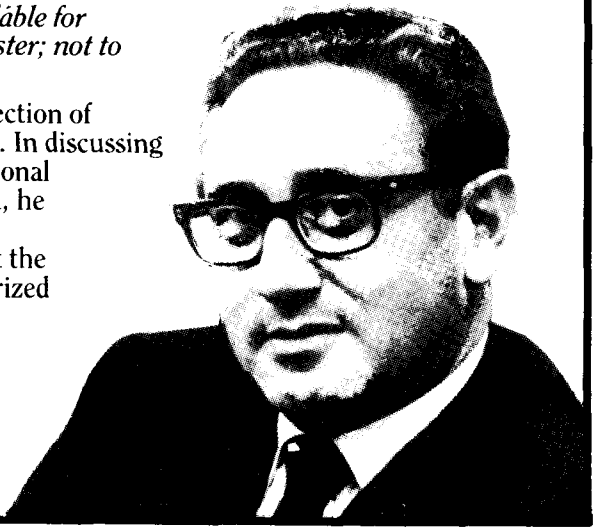

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of swords and periwigs and full-skirted coats with flowered lappets." As with Jane Austen, the prettification masks latent threats and predatoriness. "Dangers lurk around every corner", says Carpenter, "and perpetual vigilance is necessary."

BEATRIX POTTER'S MENAGERIE was an escape from a life of enforced leisure. She was a strong-willed woman, frequently at odds with the respectable society she was cushioned in—where minuscule irritations effloresced into major tragedies. Escape: this is Carpenter's key to the secret garden. Children's literature is a recovery of that land of lost content (Housman's phrase). To write, ostensibly, for children is a means of regaining the childlike state; children's literature is, in itself, a colony of escape (D. H. Lawrence's phrase). The canonical text of *Secret Gardens*, therefore, is *The Wind in the Willows*. The River, in contrast to Kingsley's necropsical stream, is the tide of Arcadia. Ratty, Toad, Badger: their hearty and masculine life makes them prototypical Inklings (about whom Carpenter has famously written). With no worry about money or work or dependants, Grahame's folk are the indulged college-men of misogynistic Oxford. The weasels' rudery in Toad Hall is like an undergraduate Dining Society; Toad himself ("The clever men at Oxford/Know all that there is to be knowed/But none of them know one half as much/As Intelligent Mr Toad!") could be Maurice Bowra had the dates matched.

The Wild Wood, though a prickly, thorny boskage, provides the safe shelter of hollow trees; and in the centre is Badger's den: "the heart of Grahame's Arcadian dream", the succour of hearth and home. Carpenter says that the Wild Wood images the entanglements of the imagination, with the idyllic secret grove of memory, of nostalgia, at its core. Quite so. It is an atavistic aboretum, a place of mingled frights and securities, of staring eyes and kitchen-warmth. But Grahame's fantasy is insufficient, as Ratty betrays when he is nearly persuaded to escape to the land across the sea. The Eden is sedulous, slumbrous, snug. Toad, too, rebels. His adventures do not seem to belong to the rest of *The Wind in the Willows*. He speeds out of the cosy mood in his motor-cars. A. A. Milne, when adapting the novel, made it into *Toad of Toad Hall*, and left most of the River scenes out. Carpenter (editor of the *Thames Companion*) is unhappy about this; nor does he like Toad's escapades much; nor does he approve of the "Piper at the Gates of Dawn" sequence. Indeed, the mystical sequence, where the god Pan manifests himself, is intrusive. But where it intrudes from is of considerable importance. Grahame had written about the satyr in the shrubbery for *The Yellow Book*. The Golden Age of children's literature is not only concurrent with the *fin de siècle* movement: it is a manifestation of it.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY'S *Under the Hill*, or *Venus and Tannhauser: A Romantic Tale*, is the candidly adult version of the books offered to infants. When the Abbé describes a "reticent, romantic lake that must have held

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the subtlest fish that ever were", we confront the sexual waters into which children's literature courses; the water tempts: "he would have liked to bath in it but he was sure he would be drowned if he did." Though representative here of ecstatic inducements, death by water was a very real phenomenon in the margins of the writers' lives: Kingsley's brother drowned himself as a child; Barrie's elder brother drowned in a skating accident; Michael Llewelyn Davies, Barrie's adopted charge, drowned himself while at Oxford; Brian Jones, a member of The Rolling Stones, who bought Milne's Cotchford Farm, drowned in the swimming-pool. Grahame's son escaped drowning: he threw himself under a train.

Carpenter suggests, rightly, that there is something about Wilde's self-destructive wildness in Toad—dandy and *bon viveur*. There is also a slice of Max Beerbohm, the Merton fop who caricatured the high-life of the 1890s, turning eminent Victorians into the inhabitants of an imperial nursery: George Moore is an abstracted dolt to whom a sinuous Yeats introduces a fairy; Austin Dobson and Edmund Gosse sit at a school-desk scribbling a rude ballad about Joseph Chamberlain; Rossetti's garden is a kindergarten. Beerbohm was puckish: an eternal child. So, curiously, was Kipling: Beerbohm draws him as a noisy brat in hoplite helmet, escorted by a marmoreal nurse who resembles Britannia in a bowler. Kipling is Puck of Pook's Hill; he was tugged by the child within himself. Kim's Lahore is a Neverland of roofs, chimneys, parapets. *Jungle Book* is an educative Wild Wood. Yet Kipling suggests something more. His manner is riddled with guilt and self-investigation. The child in him is an incubus. He is aghast at what he sees, but still gloats: "And the horror of our fall is written plain", he says in "Gentlemen-Rankers", "Every secret, self-revealing on the aching whitewashed ceiling." The canonical text of this mentality is *Peter Pan*.

I would select Barrie's play, rather than Grahame's novel, to sum up a Golden Age of children's literature. *Peter Pan*, a work which obsesses, is also repulsive—like *Salome*. Wilde, whose personal decline and fall illustrated the dictum that we always kill the thing we love (in his case: himself), devised in the Princess a class-room exercise of the motto. Salome desires Jokanaan; has him killed; slobbers over the severed head. Once it has become an object on a platter, the Baptist's congealed and diseased skull is a reflection of the Princess's mentality—which, as Herod attests, is disgustingly mesmerising. The severed head is just as much a mirror as Dorian's wizening portrait. Dorian Gray himself, by selling his soul and not growing old and ugly, is an aesthete's Faustian Peter Pan.

Peter Pan is disgustingly mesmerising. The idea about not growing up is a curse rather than a gift of freedom. Carpenter interprets the play theologically: Peter is Christ, saving the souls of Lost Boys; Hook is Satan; the Neverland is Heaven. I do not think the work is at all holy; if anything, it parodies prayers, and Peter assumes Hook's wardrobe and demeanour once the pirate-ship has been captured. Peter Pan is a demon storming the nursery. He is the archetypal changeling, devoid of parentage—as unknown and unknowable as Emily Brontë's Heathcliff: a dangerous and charismatic goblin

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brought back to Wuthering Heights by Mr Earnshaw, ". . . a dirty, ragged, black-haired child. . . . Not a soul knew to whom he belonged."

Barrie's revenant has a streak of savagery, quite alien to the pale Nazarene (Carpenter wrote the Oxford University Press "Past Master" on *Jesus*). He is described in a stage-direction as Napoleonic, and he kills and murders his way around the Neverland—a place of wolves and redskins and mermaids who want to drown the children. Peter Pan's immortality is vampiral; he is undead and lures others into his rebarbative kingdom. Wendy is his Mina Harker. Like Bram Stoker's tormented aristocrat, he flies through the air and enters through the window.

ANY SUGGESTION of erotic tingles between Peter and Wendy was lost under layers of epicene whimsy when the part was taken by a leggy actress. It wasn't until the Royal Shakespeare Company revamped and revised the play in 1982 that its subtleties and interest emerged. Miles Anderson played Peter as a gnarled gnome (Quasimodo, almost, to Wendy's teasing Esmeralda). It was in the RSC revival of 1983, however, that *Peter Pan* had what may be regarded as its true première. Mark Rylance (of whom, as Peter, Carpenter provides a photograph) was Peter Pan trapped by his own bedazzlement. So preoccupied was he with the riddle of his own existence, he was incapable of entering into true relationships. Rylance's was a perfect Peter: damned by his own gifts. Disinterred was the play's sexual impulse. Lines to Wendy were spoken with a seductive Celtic lilt: "I'll teach you how to jump on the wind's back and then away we go. . . ."

Peter Pan, first performed in 1904, miraculously interlaces with Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen*, written in 1904. The Neverland described to Wendy is the landscape described to Nora Burke: "You'll be hearing the grouse and the owls with them, and the larks and the big thrushes when the days are warm; and it's not from the like of them you'll be hearing a tale of getting old." But to achieve such a world, Nora has to leave with Michael, the spectral vagrant who appears to her as mysteriously as Peter does to Wendy. And, like Wendy, Nora succumbs to the stranger's courting, "and it's with yourself I'll go."

Peter Pan disconcerts when we realise that the boy who would not grow up is not Barrie's dead brother, is not (despite Andrew Birkin's *J. M. Barrie and the Lost Boys*: TV show and book) the Llewelyn Davies sons, but is the author himself; the play is a portrait of the artist as a detained youngster. Carpenter discusses Barrie's manipulating manner—"He was ultimately cold, remote, distant, God-like." Even his impotent marriage was manipulated into print. *Tommy and Grizel* (1900) listens to a wife's resignation about her nineteen-year-old husband: "She knew that, despite all he had gone through, he was still a boy. And boys cannot love." Wendy is similarly jilted by Peter Pan.

The only woman Barrie couldn't escape was his mother, before whom he played the part of his drowned sibling. Margaret Ogilvy inspired a touching memoir (admired by D. H. Lawrence), but really she was demanding and crazed. To try and cut himself free from her, Barrie made his fictional double, Peter Pan, motherless—only to see him yearn to find her again. Also, Peter's petulance is akin to Margaret Ogilvy's. "He tries to keep me out", she said with a lunatic's acumen, "but he canna." Wendy is a strange mixture of Peter's bride and mother—which takes us to Oedipus, another Lost Boy; which takes us back again to Freud.

CARPENTER'S BOOK is full of marvellous details and quotations, but the material is not absorbed in the same way that I, faced with the same works, would absorb it. He reasons religiously. *Alice* is "a mockery of Christian belief"; MacDonald "examined the darkness which lay beyond the religious belief of his day"; Barrie "established a quasi-religion"; in *The House at Pooh Corner*, "the narrative tone has a vaguely religious connotation. Milne seems to be preparing us for some event not unlike Christ's ascension." Dismay at orthodox churchification is what Carpenter argues these writers saw in their view from the edge. I think the turmoil is to do with investigations of passion (religion being a symptom not a cause), the contemplations of instinct, the anatomy of feeling: and all in an embarrassing, sickly way. "The decadent style", said Gautier, "is the last effort of language to express everything to the last extremity."

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Secret Gardens wants a genre for children's literature posited. I do not see that this is desirable. Children's literature is neither for children (ultimately), nor, very often, even about them. Progenitors are not merely moralists and hymnalists like Isaac Watts. The literature convened in *Secret Gardens* is spawned from potent practitioners like Byron—for whom "it was one of the deadliest and heaviest feelings of my life to feel that I was no longer a boy." Byron, Mozart, Montaigne (raised speaking Latin), Hume, Mill, Keats: they are the Peter Pans of Peter Pans.

Nor does the Golden Age come to an end—though it may look as though it does when C. S. Lewis's apologetics and Tolkien's Old Norse pastiches are taken as progeny. Peter Pan's challenge, "To die will be an awfully big adventure", portends the chivalric extermination of the Great War, with Rupert Brooke blowing out the bugles over the rich dead. Dying, however, is only a big adventure if you can stay alive to enjoy thinking about it. The secret garden is a Shangri-La, a place of agelessness: and this immortality art confers. The secret garden is more a symbol of literature than of children's literature merely. Literary criticism is an attempt to prise open the gate.

Characters cannot be killed off (as Conan Doyle discovered with Sherlock Holmes): Winnie the Pooh, a survivor of the War, being written about in the 1920s, became synonymous with Milne. Grahame's disciple, Milne, tried with Pooh, Piglet and company to resurrect the moods of *The Wind in the Willows*. In fact, the logic and number puzzles align the books with Carroll. Christopher Robin is a bossy guardian, like Alice. And characters cannot be killed off because they live on in the works of other artists: Carroll is big in *Finnegans Wake*; Grahame's messing about in boats has its echo in Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons*; Peter Rabbit, amazingly, inspired John Updike's *Rabbit* series. But it is Barrie who endures. The character of the noble savage lurks in the tendrils of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan* adventures; Ezra Pound, admirer of Disney and Fred Astaire, in his *Cantos* built a Neverland: a revolving-map of his childlike mind; Iris Murdoch makes a performance of *Peter Pan* the central point of *A Word Child*. *The Flight from the Enchanter* locates Peter Pan in Mischa Fox:

> "There was a demon in Mischa which she had never been able to know and which had never allowed them to be at peace. Always at the last moment and without apparent reason there would come the twist, the assertion of power, the hint of a complexity that was beyond her, the sense of being, after all that had passed between them, a pawn in Mischa's game—and with that twist the structure of tenderness or of delight, ever so little shifted, would seem to her an altogether different thing."

Peter Pan is busy in the work of Maurice Sendak. *Where the Wild Things Are* is about a child's nocturnal voyage to a land of beasts, which he tames. *Outside Over There* is a tale of cowled midgets stealing babies. *In the Night Kitchen* stars a wrecking, recalcitrant child, who happily smashes that tabernacle of family warmth, the stove. Sendak tells his stories through his illustrations. Pictures, in any history or literature for children, are crucial. (Peter Pan's latest destination is to be a motion-picture directed by Steven Spielberg: a close encounter of a more curious kind.) Carpenter does not mention them. They are, as Kipling would say, another story.

Wind

runs through a crumbling world,
reducing it

is in love with slenderness

is at enmity with volume,
with solidity, with density

will pull the present down about your ears
without compunction

is a harsh philosopher

has conceived of a world of sand-grains
ruled by wind

sings, murmurs, howls,
is the air's lucid wolf

Richard Poole

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Books Encountered

George Orwell and the Problem of Authentic Existence. By MICHAEL CARTER. Croom Helm, £17.95.

An earnest, fairly illuminating interpretation of Orwell as "an existential sociopolitical writer", concentrating on his novels and leaning overmuch on his childhood: photographed typescript makes it a trying read.

A Literary History of Cambridge. By GRAHAM CHAINEY. Pevensey Press, £14.95.

A Nescafé-table ramble through Cambridge literary history, with attractive illustrations: unsurprising on the earlier past, selectively gossipy on post-World-War-II. A Christmas gift for freshers?

The Bodley Head G. K. Chesterton. Selected and with an introduction by P. J. KAVANAGH. Bodley Head, £12.95.

The Man Who was Thursday, complete, plus substantial snippets of verse and prose, but omitting *Lepanto*: an honourable effort to cram the contents of the hold into hand baggage. But Samsonite is less apt than a Gladstone bag.

A Classical Education. By RICHARD COBB. Chatto & Windus / The Hogarth Press, £9.95.

More photographic-memory feats from the Senior Research Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, notably recounting his school friendship with a murderer, and proving that indiscretion is the better part of candour.

The Wisdom of Statecraft: Sir Herbert Butterfield and the Philosophy of International Politics. By ALBERTO R. COLL. Duke University Press, £25.

A respectful exposition of Butterfield's neo-Augustinian approach to history and diplomacy, revealing him as not just a critic of the Whig interpretation, but an exploratory realist, precariously optimistic.

Keith Douglas: A Prose Miscellany. Compiled and introduced by DESMOND GRAHAM. Carcanet, £8.95.

A small revelation: much newly discovered correspondence, some periodical contributions, and a handful of good poems, all from a burgeoning talent destroyed in battle in 1944, before Douglas was twenty-five.

High Road to England. By RICHARD FABER. Faber, £15.

Scratch an Englishman, find a Celt? Not really, according to Sir Richard Faber: Scots are mixed, and the Welsh are unlike the Irish. But both, and myths about them, he shows to be deeply embedded in England.

Delusion: Internal Dimensions of Political Life. By JAMES M. GLASS. University of Chicago Press, £20.75, $22.50.

Professor Glass, a political scientist, has spent seven years with psychiatric patients, and finds their delusions paralleled in the struggles and stereotypes of political theory. He might have added political practice too.

Arthur Koestler. By MARK LEVENE. Oswald Wolff, £11.95, paper £7.95.

Not, again, the masterly appraisal that Koestler's friends and admirers still await, but a dogged, low-key *vade mecum*, ranking *Darkness at Noon* (and *The Gladiators*) "among the most significant political fiction of this century."

Fate Keeps on Happening. By ANITA LOOS. Harrap, £9.95.

Uneven, sometimes witty stories, sketches, and diaries-are-a-girl's-best-friend reminiscences from the creator of Lorelei Lee, edited by her literary associate Ray Pierre Corsini with an eye to the art deco nostalgia boom.

The History of the British Film 1929-1939: Film Making in 1930s Britain. By RACHAEL LOW. Allen & Unwin, £12.95.

More nostalgia, assiduously scholarly, completing the author's compendious history. The film list includes such jollities as *Bulldog Jack* (Hulbert parodying Sapper), *Alf's Button Afloat* (Alistair Sim and the Crazy Gang), and various George Formby farces.

Among You Taking Notes. . . : The Wartime Diary of Naomi Mitchison 1939-1945. Edited by DOROTHY SHERIDAN. Gollancz, £12.95.

Local Heroine? What began as a diary for Mass Observation became a vivid chronicle of wartime life in Kintyre, with as many villagers as celebrities, plus Socialist hopes for peace ("and bloody well see that we and our children are in the ruling class—technocrats and commissars").

Memory Babe: A Critical Biography of Jack Kerouac. By GERALD NICOSIA. Viking, £16.95.

Warts-and-all account of the author of *On the Road* and *twenty-one* other books, hungry for experience, driven by traumas, mobbed by publicity, and dead from drink at forty-seven. As with Malcolm Lowry, the life rivals the works.

The Singing Game. By IONA AND PETER OPIE. Oxford University Press, £15.

Completed by Mrs Opie after her husband's death, this fittingly concludes the Opies' fascinating, uncondescending voyage of discovery through children's lore. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings comes more history than they know.

The Son of Prophecy: Henry Tudor's Road to Bosworth. By DAVID REES. Black Raven Press, £8.95.

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Psyche, Culture, and the New Science. By E. W. F. TOMLIN. Routledge & Kegan Paul, paper £6.95.

Like Herbert Butterfield, Professor Tomlin rejects reductive accounts of the self. Canvassing what he oddly calls "PN" ("psychic nutrition"), he enlists microphysics and microbiology, as well as Jung, in his quest for a synthesis of science, religion, and art.

Cecil Beaton: The Authorized Biography. By HUGO VICKERS. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.95.

Sympathetic but not sycophantic portrait of the great portraitist, revealing an agonised early love for Peter Watson, backer of *Horizon*, more about the Garbo connection, and much about Beaton's stage ambitions. The illustrations look suitably like *immortelles*.

R.M.

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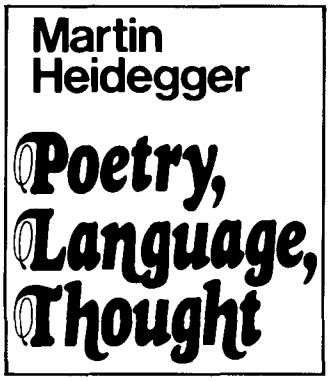
The Grand Delusion of Dr Heidegger

Words in a Speech (1933)—By DOLF STERNBERGER



THE SPEECH caused profound offence, even horror, among many people when it was delivered over fifty years ago by the philosopher Martin Heidegger at his installation as Rector of Freiburg University on 27 May 1933. Its title was "*Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität* (The Self-Affirmation of the German University)"; and the recently republished text occupies 10 printed pages, followed by 20 pages of notes written by Heidegger in 1945 and now printed for the first time.[1] Heidegger entrusted the manuscript to his son, with instructions to publish it "*zu gegebener Zeit*", at some appropriate future date. Hermann Heidegger has acted on his father's instructions; he appears as editor and contributes a short preface.

Anyone wishing to comment today on Heidegger's authoritative explanations finds himself in the embarrassing position of talking to a grave, quite unable to reach the person he is addressing. Nevertheless, Heidegger's account and self-justification cannot remain the last word on the subject: history is not made up of "last words", least of all those spoken by philosophers. No one who is concerned with Heidegger's body of thought—whether as an admirer (and there is something to admire about it), or as an impartial historian of ideas, or as a serious dissenter—can ignore this one great aberration, the one formidable misdemeanour of his life—which means, after all, his life as a thinker.

When I reread that historic document in conjunction with a first reading of the subsequent notes, it suddenly dawned on me that *Denken und Urteilen*, thought and judgment, really are two quite different faculties—as Hannah Arendt (herself once a student under Heidegger) maintained and demonstrated in her last work, *The Life of the Mind*. At any rate, there may be a divergence between the ability to think and the ability to judge; and a brilliant thinker can prove totally inadequate when it comes to making practical judgments. Possibly this is the case with Heidegger. However, I would insist that his was a pathological phenomenon, a form of intellectual sickness in which an enormous growth of the philosophical imagination was accompanied by atrophy of the power of judgment.

One precise if somewhat indulgent observer (that masterful historian Hermann Heimpel who was a Professor in Freiburg at the time) recalled not so long ago what the situation had been like in 1933:

> "For months, for about a year in fact, Heidegger had believed that the 'Revolution' would carry his philosophy to triumph. . . . When he delivered his address, however, he was disabused: the new wielders of power sat there stretching out their brown-booted legs in boredom and asking themselves, 'Is that what we are—what the little man up there in the academic ermine says we are?' "

What did he actually say? What does the much-disputed speech contain? But rather than re-open the whole moral argument, sharp indictment *vs.* indulgent defence, let me examine the language he used, starting with the vocabulary.

IT IS TRUE that the word *Rasse* (race) does not occur in the text. According to Heidegger's own testimony this was at once noted by a high local official, the Baden minister Wacker, who was in the audience. He observed that "the whole thing lacked any basis in the idea of race. . . ." In another recollection (that of H. W. Petzet, an art-historian who was a staunch friend of Heidegger's), this official Nazi Party criticism is transformed into pithy dialogue: "But Rector [*Magnifizenz*], you said nothing about the idea of race!" To which Heidegger (according to Petzet) replied "caustically": "Really—so you noticed?"

I think it rather improbable that this was how Heidegger himself related the story; what is more likely is that the witness elaborated the legend in his memory, adding a dash of wit and mildly heroic aplomb.

So *Rasse* is absent, but what about *Volk* ("the people")—*deutsches Volk* ("the German people") and *Volksgemeinschaft* ("the community of the people"), together with the derivative adjectives *volklich* and *völkisch* ("of, or pertaining to, the people")? And the notion of "earth and blood", in the adjectival phrase *erd- und bluthaft*; the spiritual world of a people is said to be "*die Macht der tiefsten Bewahrung seiner erd- und bluthaften Kräfte* (the power of the most profound ingathering of its energies deriving

[1] Vittorio Klostermann Verlag (Frankfurt, 1983).

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from earth and blood)." Moreover, there is mention of *Führung* ("leadership") and *Gefolgschaft* ("following"—in the medieval-military sense). The word *Führer* is used too, though in the plural, referring not to "*the*" Leader but to the academic élite. There are invocations of *Schicksal* ("fate, destiny"); *Auftrag* ("the mission"); *Not* ("need, emergency, hardship, necessity"); *Härte* ("hardness, rigour"); *Schärfe* ("sharpness, severity"); *Entschlossenheit* ("resolution"); and, above all, *Wille* ("will"), *Wollen* ("the act of willing"), and *Wesenswille* ("essential will").

LET ME QUOTE AN INSTANCE of the syntactical possibilities of our German word *Wille* in Heidegger's text:

> "*Der Wille zum Wesen der deutschen Universität ist der Wille zur Wissenschaft als Wille zum geschichtlichen geistigen Auftrag des deutschen Volkes als eines in seinem Staat sich selbst wissenden Volkes.*"
>
> ("The will to [realise] the essence of the German university is the will to learning as the will to [carry out] what is historically [and] spiritually enjoined upon the German people as one that knows itself to be a people in its own state.")

It is not quite clear to me that this tells anybody anything at all precise about what he is supposed to will.

Another example, which is possibly even more characteristic and significant: "*Wir wollen uns selbst*" ("We will ourselves" or "We are resolved to be ourselves"). This sentence, coming shortly before the end, has the force of a final lapidary answer to the questions that have been broached. Naturally it admits of various interpretations. Heidegger's audience may have discerned in it an implication of national (*volklich* or *völkisch*) purity, ultimately even of racial (*rassisch*) purity; and perhaps (to be on the safe side) we should not dismiss this possibility, which finds support when one looks for clarification to the succeeding sentence: "*Denn die junge und jüngste Kraft des Volkes, die über uns schon weggreift, hat darüber bereits entschieden* (For the young and youngest forces of the people, which are already reaching out beyond us, have already decided the matter)." The word *entschieden* ("decided") is spaced out for special emphasis.

The speech was delivered on 27 May 1933. Does anyone need reminding of all the things that had been "decided" by that date? The *Reichstag* had been decimated, parliamentary government virtually paralysed, the trade unions smashed. And on 1 April the youthful forces of the People had organised the first comprehensive boycott of Jewish shops and businesses. This must have been noticed—or should have been—even in Freiburg, in the southwesternmost corner of Germany. It is obvious what this phrase "We will ourselves" really signified, and was intended to signify. Heidegger did nothing to give a different, or more precise, sense to this formula of collective solipsism.

THE CATALOGUE OF Heidegger's characteristic vocabulary is not yet ended. Another item is *Marsch* ("march")—"the march on which our people has set out into its future history." Then there is *Einsatz* ("commitment", another term with military connotations—even "commitment to the last degree") and *Dienst* ("service"). *Dienst* has three forms: "work service" performed by the student; military service; and "service to knowledge" (*Wissensdienst*), this last contrasting with academic freedom (which "is being expelled from the German university"!). Other items are *Grösse* ("greatness") and *Kampf* ("fight"). The latter occurs five or six times towards the end of the speech, and one is forced to conclude that it refers to academic study itself, or to the need for study to be pursued as though it were a struggle. At one point teachers and pupils are referred to jointly as a *Kampfgemeinschaft* ("a fighting community") though we are not told what they are supposed to be fighting for or against. "*Kampf*" seems to be a bit of empty rhetoric, if somewhat suggestive.

Indeed, this is the only word on which Heidegger provides a commentary in his 1945 notes, suspecting perhaps that he had been credited with militaristic tendencies. "But what", he asks, in that characteristically didactic tone, "does the word *Kampf* mean in the context of the speech?" He associates it with Heraclitus and his famous proposition that *polemos* is the father of all things, and then proceeds to interpret this proposition. He firmly rejects as falsification the rendering of *polemos* by *Krieg* ("war"). That was in 1945. Whether the jack-booted members of the 1933 audience would have surmised this must remain a moot point. Heidegger's exegesis continues, becoming increasingly obscure and farther and farther removed from any of the meanings that anyone has ever ascribed to the word *Kampf*. Ultimately, we are informed, it means *zeigen* ("showing"), *her-stellen* ("pro-ducing, ad-ducing"), *Hervorstellen in den offenen Anblick* ("putting forward into open view"). And with obstinate didacticism he concludes:

> "This is the essence of 'struggle' [*Kampf*] in the philosophical sense, and everything that was said in the speech was meant in the philosophical sense."

Here we have an instance of that arrogant obsessiveness which Hannah Arendt described with such refreshing directness in a letter of 1957:

> "He quotes himself and interprets his own words as though he had written a biblical text. I find it insufferable."[2]

None of this explains why Heraclitus's *polemos* is not

[2] Quoted in Elisabeth Young-Bruehl's biography of Hannah Arendt (1982), p. 304.

When Hannah Arendt saw Heidegger (her teacher and friend) again after World War II, he had already applied this kind of biblical exegesis to his famous 1933 address, or at least to his use of the word *Kampf*. She could not have known this, since these notes were intended for posthumous publication; and she did not live to see them published.

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rendered by *Zeigen*, or *Hervorstellen*—or for that matter by *Auseinandersetzung* ("taking apart . . . coming to grips with"), since this is also adduced as a possible rendering. Why do all these notions have to be expressed by the word *Kampf*? There is no explanation, at least no philosophical explanation. There may have been a rhetorical, psychological, or tactical one.

THERE WAS YET ANOTHER, traditional translation of *polemos* available, viz. *Streit* ("dispute, contention"); but this was no doubt less in keeping with the spirit of the time. Four years earlier, in his famous inaugural lecture at Freiburg entitled *Was ist Metaphysik?* (1929), Heidegger had used this word "*Streit*" at a crucial point in his argument. Here too he was discussing the purpose of academic learning and the paradox that it comprehends "Nothingness" by wishing to know nothing about it. What he had said was: "In this dispute [*Streit*] a set of questions has emerged", viz. questions relating to Nothingness itself.

To be sure, no such questions are posed in his Rectoral address, nor do any of the central concepts from Heidegger's period of philosophical discovery occur. There is no *Sorge* ("concern"); no *tiefe Langeweile* ("profound weariness'); no *Befremdlichkeit des Seienden* ("strangeness of that which is"); and there is no mention of *Angst*, the existential anxiety or dread which he had previously invoked in the almost lyrical phrase *die helle Nacht des Nichts der Angst* ("the clear night of the nothingness of dread"). True, a faint echo of the earlier existential anguish may be discerned in the middle section of the 1933 address, where he discusses the proposition of Aeschylus's Prometheus about the "impotence" of knowledge "in the face of destiny." This passage, with its note of despairing heroism, looks as though it has strayed into an alien context. Otherwise the field is dominated by the People, by Struggle, by Greatness, and above all by the Will—masses and masses of Will.

And then there is the use of superlatives. This is altogether the most striking linguistic feature of the German text, and it is a novel feature in Heidegger's writing. We read of *äusserste Not* ("extreme distress"), *innerste Notwendigkeit* ("innermost necessity"), *härteste Selbstbesinnung* ("the most strenuous self-exploration"), the *höchste Gestalt des Wissens* ("the highest form of knowledge"), the *tiefste Bewahrung . . . als Macht der innersten Erregung und weitesten Erschütterung* ("the deepest conservation . . . as the power of the innermost excitement and the most extreme shock").

And so it goes on. In the few pages of the printed speech I find 36 such superlatives. Everything is the "sharpest", the "tautest", the "most characteristic", the "greatest." This is pathos shouting itself hoarse. It would be comical if it were not so painfully embarrassing. The compulsive exaggeration suggests a mind in spasm.

THE CLOSING WORDS of the 1933 address—one might almost call them its final flourish—have often been quoted. A sentence from Plato's *Republic* is quoted in Greek, and supplied with a translation into German. The Greek sentence

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Ta . . . megála pánta episphale is rendered by "*Alles Grosse steht im Sturm* (Everything great stands in the storm)."

Years later Karl Jaspers—the philosopher with the closest personal affinity to Heidegger, though at the same time his exact intellectual opposite—characterised this as an utterly capricious translation, and made the following observations: first, there is no mention of "the storm" in the Greek; and, second, the image is mere grandiloquent pathos bearing no relation to truth.[3]

Schleiermacher, the classical German translator of Plato, rendered this sentence—or rather half-sentence—quite simply as "*Denn alles Grosse ist auch bedenklich* (For everything great is also precarious)." Moreover, it is Socrates speaking; and the second half of the sentence runs: ". . . and, as they say, the beautiful is indeed difficult." A more recent translator (August Horneffer) rendered it as "*Alles Grosse ist ja leicht der Entartung ausgesetzt* (For everything great is easily prone to degeneration)." This latter version dates from the period of the Third Reich. It was published in 1943 by Kröner with an introduction by Kurt Hildebrandt, a disciple of Stefan George. Hildebrandt called Socrates a "superman" and looked forward confidently to "the return of the Hellenic spirit in German blood." This, of course, was mediocre ideological jargon; but even Heidegger, the philosopher, linked his quotation from Plato quite unashamedly with the National Socialist revolution. He spoke further of the "splendour" and "greatness" of the new movement, which "the ancient Greek wisdom" would help us understand: "Everything great stands in the storm."

Pape's Greek dictionary glosses the word *episphalés* as "*zum Fallen geneigt, wankend, unsicher* (prone to fall, unstable, insecure)", citing the Platonic passage first. The image of the storm is thus not wholly far-fetched, but what is great can be brought down by a storm—or might be—only because it is intrinsically "prone to fall, unstable, insecure." Yet this tendency inherent in everything great finds no expression in Heidegger's translation—indeed it is suppressed.

Once more the dominant sound is one which has a time-honoured allegorical role in German national-patriotic verse. In earlier wars Germans sang "*Haltet aus im Sturmgebraus* (Stand firm in the raging storm)", and Friedrich Rückert once composed a song about the *Land-Sturm*, the territorial militia of yesteryear. To say nothing of the *Sturmabteilungen*, the "storm troops" of Hitler's *Reich* (and in its last year the conscripts were the *Volkssturm*). To the jackbooted men in Rector Heidegger's Freiburg audience the word *Sturm* was readily comprehensible—more readily, at any rate, than it would have been to Socrates. If the speaker had stuck to Schleiermacher's "precarious" translation, who knows how things might have turned out?

Certainly Heidegger's term as *Rektor* didn't turn out very well; after only a year he resigned from the office.

[3] Karl Jaspers, *Notizen zu Martin Heidegger* (1978), p. 45.

In the 1945 notes he stands by the content of the speech, and berates his critics for their incomprehension and their malevolence. At the same time, he was obviously trying to take up some kind of higher position, one so lofty and distant that from it his Rectorate could appear as "*ein für sich bedeutungsloser Fall* (an essentially insignificant case)", in which the arguments for and against are so "*geringfügig* (of so little moment)" as not even to deserve to be called "*winzig* (trifling)." Now (in a phrase that is probably borrowed from Ernst Jünger) he has "planetary" movements before his mind's eye—probably an adumbration of the new idea of "*Seins-Geschichte* (the history of being)." Kierkegaard is left far behind. The infinite and unconditional importance of the individual and his choices is no longer what matters—at least it vanishes from the philosophical horizon. Ontology supersedes existence; and it sets out on a different journey, into yet another greatness. Being has to detach itself from existence in the same way as a satellite detaches itself from its launcher-rockets. To Karl Jaspers, the persistent *Existenz*-philosopher, this was a delusion ("*ein Wahn*"). For what could be emptier than "to occupy oneself with something independent of what one is and what one does. . . ." (*Notizen zu Heidegger*, No. 222)?

Among the aphorisms recorded by Martin Heidegger in 1947 and collected in a small volume under the title *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens* (*From the Experience of Thinking*) we find the following proposition:

"*Wer gross denkt, muss gross irren.*"
("Whoever has big thoughts must make big mistakes.")

This sounds, I am afraid, like a summing-up, in which self-doubt is absorbed in self-justification, if not in presumptuousness. Whoever has great ideas must make great errors. That may be so. But must he also go in for big words and grand delusions?

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One Moscow Lawyer

Defending the Defender—By LEV KOPELEV

I HAVE OFTEN HAD, in our world of illegality, occasion to reflect with a certain Russian melancholy that the last government of the short-lived Russian democracy in 1917 was headed by a lawyer, Alexander Kerensky. The first Soviet government was also headed by a lawyer, Vladimir Lenin.

I am afraid that prior to that the history of Russian jurisprudence and its advocates had been very brief—little more than half-a-century. Before the liberal reforms of Czar Alexander II (in the 1860s), trials in Russia did not have an adversarial character, a debate between two sides. The very profession of "lawyer" was most often seen in pejorative terms; and West European "barristers" were the personification of the "bourgeois liberalism" that was detested by both the devotees of autocracy and by revolutionaries. But at the end of the century there dawned a new sense of law and of civil order, and the role of a defending lawyer—of a barrister, an attorney, a *Rechts—anwalt*, acting on behalf of an individual and his rights—acquired more and more importance. Many of the deputies in the Russian *Duma* were lawyers. In the anthology *Vekhi* (*Landmarks*), published after the abortive revolt of 1905, many called for the strengthening of a sense of law and order, of justice and legality and what we would call today civil liberties and human rights.

The October *putsch* of 1917, Lenin's seizure of power, cut short this development. The "Revolutionary Tribunals" and the special "Troikas" of the *Cheka* sentenced innumerable persons to death, with no recourse to existing law and without lawyers to enter a plea on their behalf.

LEV KOPELEV *is a leading Russian dissident, now exiled in the West. He was prominent in the movement in Moscow which included the generation of Sakharov's friends. Like Solzhenitsyn, he was forced to emigrate; and he and his wife (a scholar in American studies) live and teach today in Cologne. His remarkable autobiography includes the volumes "No Jail for Thought" (1977) and "Education of a True Believer" (1981), and they are perhaps the most vivid moral self-criticism of a Bolshevik militant whose "god had failed."*

In the 1920s the hope of establishing some form of more legal order grew; new legal codes were formulated, and the legal profession was revived. In some political trials (for example, the Shatkrinsky trial of 1928) there was even a defence that really did try to vindicate the accused. But the Stalinist Terror destroyed all hopes (or so it seemed) forever. Lawyers participated in the trials of the 1930s as mere "extras", as meaningless window-dressing, for they were all obedient servants of the State as represented by the public prosecutor.

And yet . . . all the same . . . despite everything . . . the demand for justice, for legal order in the USSR, was not extirpated, and the body of trained men (and women) who constituted the legal profession was preserved. It ran parallel to, and analogically with, the situation in literature—where, despite all the Party persecution with its intimidation, techniques of ideological stupefaction and bribery, there were novelists and poets who wrote not only for their desk-drawers and artists who painted not only for so-called "closed" (ie. very private, quite secret) exhibitions. Just so there were also many lawyers who attempted, despite the all-powerful apparatus of lawlessness, to invoke certain officially recognised laws and at least to make an effort to defend individual clients in human trouble.

Many of Dina Kaminskaya's teachers were such decent citizens, even heroically idealistic lawyers, as she was herself to become. Let me recall that she entered the Faculty of Law in 1937, the very year in which the Stalin reign of terror was at its height.

Thirty years later we find her valiantly defending the dissidents: Vladimir Bukovsky, Anatoly Marchenko, Yuri Galanskov, and Pavel Litvinov. During these years she and a few of her colleagues (Sofya Kalistratovoa, Boris Zoltukhin) grew to a fame far beyond their own professional circles. Their eloquent speeches (and some of them are recorded in Dina Kaminskaya's memoirs *Final Judgement: My Life as a Soviet Defence Lawyer*[1]) were circulated in *sumizdat*. I read them at the time in Moscow, and passed them on to others.

For the first time in half-a-century, in the law courts of

[1] The book, available in the original Russian from the Khronika Press, has been published—in an English translation by Michael Glenny—by Harvill Press (London) and Simon & Schuster (New York). There is also a French edition (Robert Laffont, Paris) but as yet—curiously enough—no German edition, although long excerpts have been appearing in the journal *Der Monat* (Spring and Summer, 1985).

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Moscow, Leningrad, and indeed of Tashkent, lawyers were playing a real role in political trials and were pleading not merely for merciful mitigation for their clients' alleged misdemeanours, but also for a full acquittal on the basis of the almost subversive concept of innocence. At that time it struck many that this was unprecedented in Soviet life, and they could not quite comprehend how it came to be. Here Dina Kaminskaya's life is exemplary, for she is in a unique position to give a detailed account of the extent to which this can be seen as a "natural progression."

I note that when she first visited one of the old and traditional London law courts—and she decided to begin her memoirs in exile in this way—she was in raptures over the solemn ceremonial of English court procedure. And when she compared it, recalling all she had seen and experienced in 37 years of working in Soviet courts, she felt not only a deep sadness but also "pure envy" for English lawyers. Then there was a sudden surge also of Russian pride in her small band of Moscow colleagues—"because I was convinced that in sitting uncomfortably on window-ledges and hard benches . . . we had managed to master our shared profession of the law, surely no worse and sometimes in some respects, it seemed to me, even better than our Western colleagues." What can better sharpen the sense of justice than a struggle against heavy odds?

In 1966 we had the Daniel and Sinyavsky trials. In 1967 we had the trial of Vladimir Bukovsky and the other participants in the demonstration in Pushkin Square. In January 1968 there was the trial of Alexander Ginzburg, who had compiled courageously the "White Book" of the Daniel and Sinyavsky trial at obviously great risk to himself; and there followed the trial of Yuri Galanskov, the editor of the *samizdat* journal *Feniks* (*Phoenix*). In August 1968 there was the trial of Anatoly Marchenko who had delivered a letter to the Czechoslovak Embassy in which he condemned the Soviet press campaign against the "Prague Spring." (Here was a profoundly different Russian gesture on behalf of "international solidarity.") Finally, in October 1968, the trial of the "Red Square demonstrators" against the Kremlin's invasion of Czechoslovakia took place.

These were, I am convinced, the outstanding events of our individual lives in those fateful years as citizens of Russia—and they go hand in hand with the stages in the dramatic legal career of Dina Kaminskaya as recorded in the beautifully written pages of her memoirs.

At that time in the 1960s, it seemed to us that "political

The Quest for "a Sense of Justice"

ONE READS, *and rereads, the beautiful pages of Dina Kaminskaya's memorable document of recent Russian events with admiration, with instruction, but not without a number of untoward thoughts. On the most practical level, one is upset—as Lev Kopelev reminds us—that though Dina Kaminskaya's book was made available recently to the reader in full Russian, English and French editions, it is curiously not yet in a German one and nowhere did it receive proper critical attention. Nor is it merely a matter of understanding with greater vividness and insight the nature of Soviet society, the weaknesses and contradictions which obtain even in the most powerful of totalitarian states, and the hopes for dissidents and human rights in a harsh environment of repression. Here, of course, Kaminskaya with her feeling for human and dramatic detail—how else can a fine lawyer write about cases she defended with passion and dedication?—is a necessary complement to the writings of Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov and the others.*

But what disturbed me especially was the haunting sense of a great problem in human history to which so very few address themselves these days—*Justice*: what is it, and where does the immemorial devotion to it come from? Do we all have a "natural" sense of it? Can it be that the same sense of fundamental human fairness holds true for Russians and for Englishmen, for the French and the Germans? for the Chinese (with or without a Confucian tradition)? for Islam (with its *Shari'a* rigours)? in deepest, darkest Africa? Our contemporary minds and hearts have been deeply distracted by such questions and dilemmas. On the one hand, the burden of contemporary thought (as we have it from sociologists and anthropologists) is that different "cultures" develop different "culture patterns", and all is "relative." On the other hand, the universal morality of democratic ideology, with its devotion to human rights everywhere, entails a global faith in simple libertarian demands on the part of all peoples, the world over.

So it is, I think, only understandable that when we try to think of the matter of justice and civilisation in the longest and largest perspective, we are tempted to lose ourselves in lesser, if also important, issues. Only this morning, in a weekend London newspaper, one can read an interesting essay as to whether the "inquisitorial" approach as practised by the French judicial system is not, really, superior to the "adversarial" approach as incorporated in Anglo-American practices. One is constantly trying to weigh up the advantages of trial-by-jury as against trial by judges. Attempts are periodically made to revise the rules by which lawyers function in a court-room, witnesses give testimony, juries (or individual judges) finally hand down decisions. And it is right that this should be so, for each cultural tradition—whether as inheritors of the Roman Law or of the Common Law—has institutionalised, and sometimes too inflexibly, certain special ways of dealing with crime and punishment, with innocence and guilt, with the peaceable adjustment of disputes among citizens, according to its own history and particular temperament.

The Russians are, surely, different? So are we all.

BUT IS THERE—**and there must be, for otherwise how could the cases Dina Kaminskaya recounts in these pages move us so deeply—something which binds us all together? It was Aristotle who, in his *Politics*, observed: "all men cling to justice of some kind. . . ." And a couple of thousand years later, one of the most famous of US Supreme Court judges (Benjamin Cardozo) dissented from a majority decision in a case because it did not meet "my sense of justice." Where did his—and the Greek philosopher's and the Russian defence lawyer's—"sense of justice" come from?**

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legal work" had already begun to revive itself. However, one must recognise 'that, even then, defence lawyers had to operate in restricted conditions quite beyond the imagination of all but a few of their Western colleagues. There was an additional difficulty for lawyers who loved liberty and were committed to the cause of human rights. To a significant extent, Kaminskaya shared her clients' views and dissident opinions. But not a hint of this could ever emerge in court, because such a suggestion would have destroyed any future possibility of her acting on behalf of other like-minded defendants in other trials. She prudently observed the forms and the limits, and she tried to prove in courtroom argumentation that the defendants had not contravened Soviet law, that in each case their right to civil protest had not gone against the spirit or the letter of the Soviet Constitution, whose clauses, indeed, specified (if only on paper) certain prerogatives.

It is sad to report that not one of these trials culminated in a complete victory for the defence. Not one of the accused was acquitted and released. None the less, Dina Kaminskaya's brilliant endeavours were not in vain. It is certainly clear that without her the sentences would have been more severe. And, perhaps even more than that, the immediate help she gave her distressed clients in their time of trouble was indispensable. I remember how in September 1968 she, a small woman, carried two heavy bags of papers and documents—and foodstuffs—every day to the Lefortovo prison . . . in order to provide life-saving meals for Litvinov and for Bogoraz. She was the "human link" between them and their families and friends. She helped them to overcome their loneliness, and at times their deepest despair. And her remarkable speeches—heard attentively in the court-room, broadcast back to the USSR by foreign radio stations, read in *samizdat*—likewise helped in the moral regeneration of a new public awareness. I am reminded again of the poems, novels, essays, and scholarly works which surfaced during the years of "The Thaw" and brought new hopes (if also a few new illusions). Still, against all odds and disappointments, there opened up a new era in our spiritual life.

WE OFTEN USED TO SAY, of an evening, "Let's drink to the victory of our hopeless mission!"—and this was not merely a poignant irony. We had hope without illusions, we were perhaps even optimists without hope. I and my friends in Moscow were convinced that Dina Kaminskaya and her colleagues, in defending their clients against charges and accusations, in challenging weak or spurious evidence, in

Theologians will offer a transcendental explanation wherein God and religion are the prime sources of all human ideals; Marxists will interpret the class (and other material) struggles of unjust social orders as the dialectical basis for a consciousness of better arrangements; and liberals can, of course, always have recourse to a faith in progress where dawning awareness of the good, the true, and the beautiful can be detected everywhere.

Be that as it may, in my own case, as I have been trying to suggest, I have been thrown back to the question, not the answer. The contemplation of great human ideals always begins in wonder—the wondrous sense of puzzlement of how, and where, in the course of so many tragic chapters in the recorded history of mankind we stumble across a tablet, a scroll, a phrase scribbled or etched, which suggests what must surely be a miraculous breakthrough to a new human dimension.

I remember once, on a voyage down the Nile, being preoccupied with this problem, exposed as I had been to the ship's library which included Egyptological works by Adolf Erman, the *Joseph* novels of Thomas Mann, several translations of the *Book of the Dead*. Were *they* like *us*? And then, in a corner of the Cairo Museum, I came across some messages on papyri from the second millennium B.C. An Upper Nile herdsman has returned from the wars along the Tigris and Euphrates and finds that his house, his farmland, his animals have all been taken from him. An agreement had been violated. He was poor and in despair. Where could he obtain the redress? From an official in Thebes? The pharaoh in Memphis? *Was there no justice in the world?*

IT IS THIS PLAINTIVE CRY *which can be silently heard in reading the Kaminskaya book. By itself it raises no political or philosophical issues, but still it drives one back to pondering the largest questions in the history of civilisation. As I say, more is involved here than the historic emergence of such rights as freedom from arbitrary imprisonment and the presumption of innocence (until proven guilty), and even Paul's ancient Roman privilege of "facing one's accusers."*

For Thomas Mann's Joseph, justice lay in "deliverance": but it was a liberation which also incorporated an ideal of freedom and human rights. Others in ancient Egypt were also concerned with **Ma'at** *(and Egyptologists have translated the little hieroglyph variously as "straightness . . . correctness . . . truth . . . righteousness"). One Luxor vizier has left this testament: "When I judged a petitioner, I showed no partiality. . . . I rescued the timid man from the arrogant." This memorable outburst along the Nile is also recorded—*

"Seizers! robbers! plunderers! officials!—and yet appointed to punish evil! Officialdom is the refuge of the arrogant—and yet appointed to punish falsehood!"[1]

REREADING KAMINSKAYA'S BOOK *I have been tempted to think that Moscow is not all that far from Memphis, for the quest for justice is always rooted in protest and the decent hope for an honourable human arrangement. And very early on, in what Breasted called "the dawn of conscience", those who sought for humanity in the law have been taken to be the real heroes of history. In the longest discourse on justice which we have from the ancient fragments along the Nile, there is this tribute:*

"But justice lasts forever and goes down into the necropolis with him who renders it. When he is buried and joined to the earth, his name is not wiped out on earth, but he is remembered for goodness. That is a principle of the divine order. . . ."

M.J.L.

[1] My Egyptian quotations are from *Before Philosophy*, by Henri Frankfort, John A. Wilson, et al. (University of Chicago Press, 1946).

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appealing to sections of the law which suggested (as Orwell would prefer) that "innocence is not the same as guilt"—were at the same time defending the noble ideal of the Rule of Law itself.

Nor was this important only for so-called political trials. Consider one of Dina Kaminskaya's most celebrated cases (and these chapters are a small masterpiece of trial reportage). A 15-year-old girl was raped and murdered (it happened in the village of Peredelkino, not far from the well-known Writers' Colony). The culprit was not found. But it was evidently necessary for the public prosecutor and the militia to "close the case" urgently; higher authorities were watching them. Consequently two of the murdered girl's classmates were "selected" as the missing culprits, for they happened to be the last to have seen the girl alive. The boys were summarily arrested and charged. Hardened professional criminals and paid informers were put into their cell in order to terrify and intimidate them: "If you don't confess now—while you are still under age—you will be condemned to be shot later. . . ." And they "confessed."

Lawyers Kaminskaya and Lev Yudovich were not only up against the stony hostility of the official investigators; they also had to tread with caution in persuading their inexperienced defendants to change their minds, to recant their recantantions (always dangerous in an orthodox Party-State), and to explain to them the meaning of self-denunciation and self-incrimination. In long bouts and duels the official "evidence" was torn to shreds. The boys' innocence was brilliantly proved in the third and final trial.

I OFTEN SAW Kaminskaya in Moscow. We would sit together at that same oval table, the one on which she would play patience for hours while she mulled over the problems of a new case she was defending.

Dina and her husband Konstanin Simis (also a lawyer) were renowned for their generous hospitality. Despite stormy and busy careers they cheerfully served their guests delicacies which they prepared themselves, and delighted not only in lively conversation but in the graces of a good table.

In 1978 Simis was forced to make an appearance on the bench of the accused. He had been writing a long sociological work on corruption in the USSR; the manuscript was found in his flat, seized, and termed to be "anti-Soviet." Simis was questioned repeatedly by the *KGB*. Both he and his wife were dismissed from their work, and ultimately compelled to emigrate.

The Kaminskaya memoirs to which I am trying to awaken Western readers are, in my view, an honest and dramatic account taken from the record of one Russian woman's life; and they recapture vividly central experiences in the history of our times. It is surely nothing new to say that there is an unofficial and even a secret aspect of Soviet reality. Dina Kaminskaya's memoirs remind all of us that without knowledge and understanding of the "hidden essences" it is impossible to comprehend problems in which liberty and repression, even war and peace, figure. For there is here revealed an intricate and contradictory combination of truth and falsehood which dominates an ideological society, mixing at times love for the Motherland with mercenary gain and selfish security, and reflecting that context of ordinary good and extraordinary evil in which Soviet society exists and grows.

What is vitally important about the life and fate of Dina Kaminskaya is that it is one more demonstration of the truth, so glaring in the Eastern Europe of today, that Society is not identical with the State. Despite the totalitarian framework of the Soviet system there are forces of humane and civilised opposition. They are threatened and oppressed, often imprisoned and sometimes expelled. But they all have names and faces, and can be proud of an independent human achievement under inhuman pressures.

Demeter

The evening's rough abduction of the day
is over now. Persephone still sleeps
at the edge of time. Winter, harsh and grey
amerces all. Persistently he weeps
with the Dark Mother. Prematurely old,
indifferent to the gods of sleep and dream,
she travels like a madness through the cold,
wanders like a beggar, cries and screams,
scathes and blights where once she used to bless
the grass-green world. Thick winds blow from her lips.
Her tears fall like the plague. Her tattered dress
is scattered, as the branches birch her hips.
She listens for some cry, some plaintive sound
that penetrates the moist and rotten ground.

John Gurney

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DOCUMENT

Who Killed the Spirit of '68?
or, the Day the "Ramparts" Fell

Goodbye to All That—By PETER COLLIER & DAVID HOROWITZ

WHEN WE TELL our old radical friends that we voted for Ronald Reagan last November, the response is usually one of annoyed incredulity. After making sure that we are not putting them on, our old friends make nervous jokes about Jerry Falwell and Phyllis Schlaffly, about gods that have failed, about ageing yuppies ascending to consumer heaven in their BMWs. We remind them of an old adage: "Anyone under 40 who isn't a socialist has no heart—anyone over 40 who is a socialist has no brain."

Inevitably the talk becomes bitter. One old comrade, after a tirade in which she had denounced us as reactionaries and crypto-fascists, finally sputtered, "And the worst thing is that you've turned your back on the *Sixties*!" That was exactly right: casting our ballots for Ronald Reagan was indeed a way of finally saying goodbye to all that—to the self-aggrandising romance with corrupt Third Worldism; to the casual indulgence of Soviet totalitarianism; to the hypocritical and self-dramatising anti-Americanism which is the New Left's bequest to mainstream politics.

The instruments of popular culture may perhaps be forgiven for continuing to portray the '60s as a time of infectious idealism, but those of us who were active then have no excuse for abetting this banality. If in some ways it was the best of times, it was also the worst of times, an era of bloodthirsty fantasies as well as spiritual ones. We ourselves experienced both aspects, starting as civil-rights and anti-war activists and ending as co-editors of the New Left magazine *Ramparts*. The magazine post allowed us to write about the rough beast slouching through America and also to urge it on through non-editorial activities we thought of as clandestine until we later read about them in the FBI and CIA files we both accumulated.

Like other radicals in those early days, we were against electoral politics, regarding voting as one of those charades used by the ruling class to legitimate its power. We were even more against Reagan, then governor of California, having been roughed up by his troopers during the People's Park demonstrations in Berkeley and tear-gassed by his National Guard helicopters during the University of California's Third World Liberation Front Strike.

But neither elections nor elected officials seemed particularly important compared with the auguries of Revolution the Left saw everywhere by the end of the decade—in the way the nefarious Richard Nixon was widening the war in Indo-China; in the unprovoked attacks by paramilitary police against the Black Panther Party; in the formation of the "Weather Underground", a group willing to pick up the gun or the bomb. It was a time when the apocalypse struggling to be born seemed to need only the slightest assist from the radical midwife.

When we were in the voting booth this past November (in different precincts but of the same mind) we both thought back to the day in 1969 when Tom Hayden came by the office and, after getting a *Ramparts* donation to buy gas masks and other combat issue for Black Panther "guerrillas", announced portentously:

> "Fascism is here, and we're all going to be in jail by the end of the year."

We agreed wholeheartedly with this apocalyptic vision and in fact had just written in an editorial:

> "The system cannot be revitalised. It must be overthrown. As humanly as possible, but by any means necessary."

Every thought and perception in those days was filtered through the dark and distorting glass of the Viet Nam war.

WHAT rapscallions they were! But they did represent, at its purest and most characteristic, the spirit of '68—from Student (and Flower) power to Black militance and the anti-American exposure of America as a congeries of sinister conspiracies. Most of it was, to be sure, arrant nonsense; and many critical writers in ENCOUNTER said so at the time. Now the editors of "Ramparts" (who had hounded us, among many others, as "running dogs of imperialism") say as much about themselves. Collier & Horowitz have written a document of disillusionment and disenchantment. And if it is not exactly a "God" that is seen to be failing here—the new pseudo-divinities were of a petty, shoddy fashioning—it still is a notable confession and recantation, a stirring piece of self-criticism, rare among the erratic, frenetic ideologues of our day.

M. J. L.

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The Left was hooked on Viet Nam. It was an addictive drug whose rush was a potent mix of melodrama, self-importance, and moral rectitude. Viet Nam was a universal solvent—the explanation for every evil we saw and the justification for every excess we committed. Trashing the windows of merchants on the main streets of America seemed warranted by the notion that these petty-bourgeois shopkeepers were cogs in the system of capitalist exploitation that was obliterating Viet Nam. Fantasising the death of local cops seemed warranted by the role they played as an occupying army in America's black ghettos, those mini-Viet Nams we yearned to see explode in domestic wars of liberation. Viet Nam caused us to acquire a new appreciation for foreign tyrants like Kim Il Sung of North Korea. Viet Nam also caused us to support the domestic extortionism and violence of groups like the Black Panthers, and to dismiss derisively Martin Luther King, Jr. as an "Uncle Tom." (The Left has conveniently forgotten this fact now that it finds it expedient to invoke King's name and reputation to further its domestic politics.)

How naive the New Left was can be debated, but by the end of the '60s we were not political novices. We knew that bad news from South-east Asia—the reports of bogged-down campaigns and the weekly body counts announced by Walter Cronkite—was good for the radical agenda. The more repressive our government in dealing with dissent at home, the more recruits for our cause and the sooner the appearance of the revolutionary Armageddon.

OUR ASSUMPTION that Viet Nam would be the political and moral fulcrum by which we would tip this country toward revolution foresaw every possibility except one: that the United States would pull out. Never had we thought that the US, the arch-imperial power, would of its own volition withdraw from Indo-China. This development violated a primary article of our hand-me-down Marxism: that political action through normal channels could not alter the course of the war. The system we had wanted to overthrow worked tardily and only at great cost, but it worked.

When American troops finally came home, some of us took the occasion to begin a long and painful re-examination of our political assumptions and beliefs. Others did not. For the diehards, there was a post-Viet Nam syndrome in its own way as debilitating as that suffered by people who had fought there—a sense of emptiness rather than exhilaration, a paradoxical desire to hold on to and breathe life back into the experience that had been their high for so many years.

AS THE POST-VIET NAM DECADE progressed, the diehards on the left ignored conclusions about the viability of democratic traditions that might have been drawn from America's exit from Viet Nam and from the Watergate crisis that followed it, a time when the man whose ambitions they had feared most was removed from office by the Constitution rather than by a coup. The only "lessons" of Viet Nam the Left seemed interested in were those that emphasised the danger of American power abroad and the need to diminish it, a view that was injected into the Democratic party with the triumph of the McGovernite wing. The problem with this use of Viet Nam as a moral text for American policy, however, was that the pages following the fall of Saigon had been whited out.

No lesson, for instance, was seen in Hanoi's ruthless conquest of the South, the establishment of a police state in Saigon and the political oblivion of the National Liberation Front, whose struggle we on the Left had so passionately supported. It was not that credible information was lacking. Jean Lacouture wrote in 1976:

> "Never before have we had such proof of so many detained after a war. Not in Moscow in 1917. Not in Madrid in 1939, not in Paris and Rome in 1944, nor in Havana in 1959. . . ."

But this eminent French journalist, who had been regarded as something of an oracle when he was reporting America's derelictions during the war, was dismissed as a "sellout."

In 1977, when some former anti-war activists signed an "Appeal to the Conscience of Viet Nam" because of the more than 200,000 prisoners languishing in "Re-education Centres" and the new round of self-immolations by Buddhist monks, they were chastised by activist David Dellinger, Institute for Policy Studies fellow Richard Barnet, and other keepers of the flame in a *New York Times* advertisement that said in part:

> "The present government of Viet Nam should be hailed for its moderation and for its extraordinary effort to achieve reconciliation among all of its people."

WHEN TENS OF THOUSANDS of unreconciled "Boat People" began to flee the repression of their Communist rulers, Joan Baez and others who spoke out in their behalf were attacked for breaking ranks with Hanoi.

Something might also have been learned from the fate of wretched Cambodia. But Leftists seemed so addicted to finding an American cause at the root of every problem that they couldn't recognise indigenous evils. As the Khmer Rouge were about to take over, Noam Chomsky wrote that their advent heralded a Cambodian liberation, "a new era of economic development and social justice." The new era turned out to be the killing fields that took the lives of two million Cambodians.

FINALLY, Viet Nam emerged as an imperialist power, taking control of Laos, invading Cambodia and threatening Thailand. But in a recent editorial, *The Nation* explains that the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia "to stop the killing and restore some semblance of civilised government to the devastated country." This bloody occupation is actually a "rescue mission", and should not "obscure the responsibility of the United States for the disasters in Indo-China", disasters that are being caused by playing the "China card" and refusing to normalise relations with Viet Nam. These acts

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on the part of the United States "make Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia unlikely"; only the White House can "remove the pressures on Viet Nam from all sides [that] would bring peace to a ravaged land." Such reasoning recalls the wonderful line from the Costa-Gavras film *Z*:

> "Always blame the Americans. Even when you're wrong, you're right."

ANOTHER UNACKNOWLEDGED LESSON from Indo-China involves the way in which Viet Nam has become a satellite of the Soviet Union (paying for foreign aid by sending labour brigades to its benefactor).

This development doesn't mesh well with the Left's ongoing romantic vision of Hanoi. It also threatens the Left's obstinate refusal to admit that during the mid-1970s—a time when American democracy was trying to heal itself from the twin traumas of the war and Watergate—the USSR was demonstrating that totalitarianism abhors a vacuum by moving into Africa, Central America, South-east Asia, and elsewhere. Instead of evaluating the Soviets because of the change in what we used to call "the objective conditions", the Left rationalises Soviet aggressions as the spasms of a petrified bureaucracy whose policies are annoying mainly because they distract attention from US malfeasance around the world.

If they were capable of looking intently at the Soviet Union, Leftists and Liberals alike would have to concur with Susan Sontag's contention (which many of them jeered at when she announced it) that Communism is simply left-wing fascism.

ONE OF THE REASONS the Left has been so cautious in its reassessments of the Soviets is the fiction that the USSR is on the side of "history."

This assumption is echoed in Fred Halliday's euphoric claim, in a recent issue of *New Left Review*, that Soviet support was crucial to 14 Third-World revolutions during the era of *détente* (including such triumphs of human progress as Iran and South Yemen), and in Andrew Kopkind's fatuous observation that "the Soviet Union has almost always sided with the revolutionists, the liberationists, the insurgents." In Ethiopia?

Propped up by 200,000 Cuban legionnaires, the Marxist government of Mengistu Haile Mariam has as its main accomplishment a "Red Campaign of Terror" (its official designation) that killed thousands of people. Where were those who cheer the Soviets' work on behalf of the socialist *Zeitgeist* when this episode took place? Or this past fall when the Marxist liberator squandered more than $40 million on a party celebrating the 10th anniversary of his murderous rule while his people starved? Where were they to point out the moral when capitalist America rushed in 250 million metric tons of grain to help allay the Ethiopian starvation while the Soviets were managing to contribute only ten million metric tons? Where are they now that Mengistu withholds emergency food supplies from the starving provinces of Eritrea and Tigre because the people there are in rebellion against his tyranny?

REAGAN is often upbraided for having described the Soviet Union as "an evil empire." Those opposed to this term seem to be offended aesthetically rather than politically. Just how wide of the mark is the President? Oppressing an array of nationalities whose populations far outnumber its own, Russia is the last of the old European empires, keeping in subjugation not only formerly independent states such as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (Hitler's gift to Stalin), but also the nations of Eastern Europe. Every country "liberated" into the Soviet bloc has been transformed into a national prison, where the borders are guarded to keep the inmates in rather than the foreigners out.

The war in Afghanistan is much more a metaphore for the Soviets' view of the world than Viet Nam ever was for America's. Of the approximately 16 million people living in Afghanistan at the time of the Soviet invasion, an estimated one million have already been killed and wounded. There are now about four million refugees, a figure that does not include "internal" refugees—the hundreds of thousands of villagers forced to leave their scorched earth for the Soviet-controlled big cities, the only places where food is available. Or the thousands of Afghan children who have been taken to the Soviet Union to be "educated" and who will eventually be returned to their native land as spies and quislings.

SOVIET STRATEGY is based on a brutal rejoinder to Mao's poetic notion (which we old New Leftists used to enjoy citing) about guerrillas being like fish swimming in a sea of popular support. The Soviet solution is to boil the sea and ultimately drain it, leaving the fish exposed and gasping on barren land.

The Russian presence is characterised by systematic destruction of crops and medical facilities, indiscriminate terror against the civilian population, carpet bombings and the deadly "yellow rain" that even the Leftist Peoples Tribunal in Paris (successor to the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal) has said is being used in Afghanistan.

During each December anniversary of the Soviet invasion, when liberal politicians rediscover the *mujaheddin* guerrillas in the hills, after eleven months of moral amnesia, there are blithe references to Afghanistan as "Russia's Viet Nam."

Those who invoke the analogy seem to think that simply by doing so they have doomed the Russian storm-troopers to defeat. But this analogy is based on a misunderstanding of what Viet Nam was and what Afghanistan is. Unlike America's high-tech television war, Afghanistan is one of those old-fashioned encounters that take place in the dark. The Soviets make no attempt to win hearts and minds; the "*My Lais*" that are daily occurrences there cause no shock because they do not appear on Moscow TV. There are no scenes of the peasant children whose hands and faces have been destroyed by anti-personnel bombs in the shapes of toy

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trucks and butterflies a Los Angeles physician we know saw strewn over the Afghan countryside. There are no images of body-bags being offloaded from Soviet transports. Because there is no media coverage, there can be no growing revulsion on the home front, no protests on Soviet campuses and in Soviet streets, no clamour to bring the boys home.

Afghanistan is not "Russia's Viet Nam" not only because the nation committing the atrocities never sees them, but because the rest of the world is blacked out, too. At the height of the Viet Nam war there was a non-combatant army of foreign journalists to witness its conduct. In Afghanistan they are forbidden, as are the Red Cross and all other international relief agencies that were integral to what happened in Viet Nam. And without these witnesses, Afghanistan is a matter of "out of sight, out of mind."

IN VIET NAM we waged a war against ourselves and lost. The Soviets will not let that happen to them. The truth of the Viet Nam analogy is not that guerrillas must inevitably bog down and defeat a superior force of invaders, but that war against indigenous forces by a superpower can be won if it is waged against a backdrop of international ignorance and apathy. The proper analogy for Afghanistan is not Viet Nam at all but rather Spain—not in the nature of the war, but in the symbolic value it has for our time—or should—in terms of democracy's will to resist aggression. Aid to the *mujaheddin* should not be a dirty little secret of the CIA, but a matter of public policy and national honour as well.

PERHAPS THE LEADING FEATURE of the Left today is the moral selectivity that French social critic Jean-François Revel has identified as "the syndrome of the cross-eyed Left."

Leftists can describe Viet Nam's conquest and colonialisation of Cambodia as a "rescue mission", while reviling Ronald Reagan for applying the same term to the Grenada operation, although better than 90% of the island's population told independent pollsters they were grateful for the arrival of US troops. Forgetting for a moment that Afghanistan is "Russia's Viet Nam", Leftists call Grenada "America's Afghanistan", although people in Afghanistan (as one member of the resistance there told us) would literally die for the elections held in Grenada.

The Left's memory can be as selective as its morality. When it comes to past commitments that have failed, the Leftist mentality is utterly unable to produce a coherent balance sheet, let alone a profit-and-loss statement. The attitude toward Soviet penetration of the Americas is a good example. Current enthusiasm for the Sandinista régime in Nicaragua should recall to those of us old enough to remember a previous enthusiasm for Cuba 25 years ago. Many of us began our "New Leftism" with the "Fair Play for Cuba" demonstrations. We raised our voices and chanted, "*Cuba Si! Yanqui No!*" We embraced Fidel Castro not only because of the flamboyant personal style of the *barbudos* of his 26th of July Movement but also because Castro assured the world that his revolution belonged to neither Communists nor capitalists, that it was neither red nor black, but Cuban olive-green.

WE ATTRIBUTED Castro's expanding links with Moscow to the US-sponsored invasion of the Bay of Pigs, and then to the "secret war" waged against Cuba by US intelligence and paramilitary organisations. But while Castro's apologists in the United States may find it expedient to maintain these fictions, Carlos Franqui and other old Fidelistas now in exile have made it clear that Castro embraced the Soviets even before the US hostility became decisive, and that he steered his country into an alliance with the Soviets with considerable enthusiasm. Before the Bay of Pigs he put a Soviet general in charge of Cuban forces. Before the Bay of Pigs he destroyed Cuba's democratic trade-union movement, although its elected leadership was drawn from his own 26th of July Movement. He did so because he knew that the Stalinists of Cuba's Communist Party would be dependable cheerleaders and efficient policemen of his emerging dictatorship.

ONE SYMBOLIC EVENT along the way that many of us missed was Castro's imprisonment of his old comrade Huber Matos, liberator of Matanzas Province, and one of the four key military leaders of the revolution. Matos's crime: criticising the growing influence of Cuban Communists (thereby jeopardising Castro's plans to use them as his palace guard). Matos's sentence: 20 years in a 4-by-11 concrete box. Given such a precedent, how can we fail to support Eden Pastora for taking up arms against early signs of similar totalitarianism in Nicaragua?

What has come of Cuba's revolution to break the chains of American imperialism? Soviets administer the still one-crop Cuban economy; Soviets train the Cuban army; and Soviet subsidies, fully one-quarter of Cuba's gross national product, prevent the Cuban treasury from going broke. Before the revolution, there were more than 35 independent newspapers and radio stations in Havana. Now, there is only the official voice of *Granma*, the Cuban *Pravda*, and a handful of other outlets spouting the same party line. Today Cuba is a more abject and deformed colony of the Soviet empire than it ever was of America. The arch-rebel of our youth, Fidel Castro, has become a party hack who cheerfully endorsed the rape of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and endorses the ongoing plunder of Afghanistan today, an ageing pimp who sells his young men to the Russians for use in their military adventures in return for $10 billion a year.

IN LEFTIST CIRCLES, of course, such arguments are anathema, and no historical precedent, however daunting, can prevent outbreaks of radical chic.

Epidemics of radical chic cannot be prevented by referring to historical precedents. That perennial delinquent Abbie Hoffman will lead his Potemkin-village tours of Managua. The Hollywood stars will dish up Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega as an exotic hors-d'oeuvre on the Beverly

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Hills cocktail circuit. In the self-righteous moral glow accompanying such gatherings, it will be forgotten that, through the offices of the US government, more economic and military aid was provided the Sandinistas in the first 18 months following their takeover than was given to Somoza in the previous 20 years, and that this aid was cut off primarily because of the clear signs that political pluralism in Nicaragua was being terminated.

Adherents of today's version of radical chic may never take seriously the words of Sandinista directorate member Bayardo Arce when he says that elections are a "hindrance" to the goal of "a dictatorship of the proletariat" and necessary only "as an expedient to deprive our enemies of an argument." They will ignore former Sandinista hero and now Contra leader Eden Pastora, who sees the Junta as traitors who have sold out the revolutionary dream. ("Now that we are occupied by foreign forces from Cuba and Russia, now that we are governed by a dictatorial government of nine men, now more than ever the Sandinista struggle is justified.") They will ignore opposition leader Arturo Cruz, an early supporter of the Sandinista revolution and previously critical of the Contras, when the worsening situation makes him change his mind and ask the Reagan administration to support them in a statement that should have the same weight as Andrei Sakharov's plea to the West to match the Soviet arms build-up.

AMERICAN LEFTISTS propose solutions for the people of Central America that they wouldn't dare propose for themselves. These armchair revolutionaries project their self-hatred and their contempt for the privileges of democracy—which allow them to live well and to think badly—on to people who would be only too grateful for the luxuries they disdain. Dismissing "bourgeois" rights as a decadent frill that the peoples of the Third World can't afford. Leftists spreadeagle the Central Americans between the dictators of the Right and the dictators of the Left. The latter, of course, are their chosen instruments for bringing social justice and economic well-being, although no Leftist revolution has yet provided impressive returns on either of these qualities and most have made the lives of their people considerably more wretched than they were before.

VOTING IS SYMBOLIC BEHAVIOUR, a way of evaluating what one's country has been as well as what it might become. We do not accept Reagan's policies chapter and verse (especially in domestic policy, which we haven't discussed here), but we agree with his vision of the world as a place increasingly inhospitable to democracy and increasingly dangerous for America.

One of the few saving graces of age is a deeper perspective on the passions of youth. Looking back on the Left's revolutionary enthusiasms of the last 25 years, we have painfully learned what should have been obvious all along: that we live in an imperfect world that is bettered only with great difficulty and easily made worse—much worse. This is a conservative assessment, but on the basis of half a lifetime's experience, it seems about right.

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Under The Sea

Ammonites on the shore
remember curl upon curl
waves glinting
ghosted to another world.

A fish laps sandstone,
ripples echo miles,
scales fin out.
Slow sediment forms;

an imprint of years and years,
old and forever new,
a tannined impression
swimming vaguely in dust.

A man perched on a rock
like a fly,
nips the air with a hammer,
chasing his fossil home.

Deirdre Shanahan

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RECONSIDERATIONS

Hitler's Politics & Psychopathology

An Interpretation—By DAVID ABERBACH

HITLER CAME TO POWER through an extraordinary concatenation of political and economic crisis and personal psychopathology. The historical circumstances which paved the way for Hitler have been studied exhaustively, and Hitler's family background has been explored as far as the meagre documentation allows. Yet the undoubted vital interconnection between the historical facts and Hitler's inner world remains obscure.

It is generally agreed by historians that Germany's defeat in the First World War, the unprecedented, futile suffering and death, the uncertainty, frustration and rage, the blow to national pride, led to Hitler's entry to politics. Germany's traditional problems—*Lebensraum* and unity—became national obsessions after the war, especially as the Russian Revolution threatened to spill over into Germany. Amid panic, disunity, and political and economic upheaval, Hitler took his first steps to power. The Wall Street crash of 1929, and the panic and depression which followed, precipitated his ascent to the Chancellorship. In the 1928 elections, Hitler received 811,000 votes (about 100,000 less than in 1924); in 1930, 6.3 million Germans voted for him.

Hitler came to power in 1933 through democratic means, with the support of the masses. He was welcomed by intellectuals as well as workers, by industrialists and artists, farmers and philosophers, generals and housewives. Many considered him to be a charming, intelligent, perceptive, highly competent and many-sided leader—a born politician. His achievements until the War were not inconsiderable. He eliminated unemployment through a massive rearmament programme (there were six million unemployed when he came to power), stabilised the currency, provided effective social legislation, and gave Germany for the first time since 1914 a sense of unity and optimism.

Despite the purges of the *SA* in 1934 and the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, David Lloyd George could describe Hitler as "the George Washington of Germany"; and Churchill regarded Hitler's accomplishments until 1937 as "among the most remarkable in the whole history of the world." And, in the 1930s, the German people willingly, even joyfully, pledged their loyalty not merely to Hitler the politician but to Hitler the myth, the semi-deity, the Messiah, the embodiment of the national will. Never in history has one man wielded such power over a people.

Political and economic conditions aside, how can Hitler's hold on the German people be explained?[1]

PART OF THE ANSWER lies in Alan Bullock's observation that no political leader has ever shown greater understanding of the irrational and emotional factors in politics, or exploited them more masterfully. Hitler's instinct for the theatrical (Chaplin once described him as "the greatest actor of us all"), his fanatically sincere oratory, his use of his hands and eyes (for which he received professional training), hypnotised his audiences and brought about their complete identification with him.

Hitler, in addition, was the first master of the mass media, of radio and the newsreel (sound came in just as his career was about to take off), and of the modern election campaign. The newness of it all gave his presence and voice in mass rallies and on radio and film an almost apocalyptic quality. His propaganda was planned and carried out with utmost effectiveness. Such forces seem to have overwhelmed the German masses, raised in a highly authoritarian family structure, social hierarchy, educational system and military tradition. Tens of thousands of ex-servicemen who had not found a place in post-War German society were magnetised by Hitler; he was, after all, one of them, and he offered them a uniform, a group identity and an outlet for their frustrations. Their resistance lowered by the terror of political and economic chaos, by a lingering sense of inferiority, betrayal and hate, Germans were on the whole willing to throw their lot in with Hitler and ignore the possibility of disastrous long-term consequences.

The short-term gains were considerable. Hitler's violent assumption of dictatorial power in 1933-34 gave Germany unity; his persecution of the Jews and the Nuremberg Laws assuaged German inferiority; the repudiation of the terms of the Versailles Treaty and the military build-up alleviated

[1] See, in general, among the many biographies of Hitler, Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (1952), and Joachim Fest, *Hitler* (1974).

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German shame at being defeated; the remilitarisation of the Rhineland (1936), the "bloodless conquests" of Austria and the Sudetenland (1938) and Czechoslovakia (1939) reinforced Germany's new-found sense of power and vitality.

The price that the world paid in the end was over 30 million dead; and the price paid by Germany was defeat and the stigma of having dehumanised itself by criminally dehumanising and murdering countless victims.[2]

Who was Hitler? What were the sources of his hatred, of the Jews in particular?

THE FULLEST ACCOUNT of Hitler's early life appears in John Toland's biography.[3] Hitler's father was an Austrian customs official who never knew his father (who might have been a Jew) and who lost his mother in childhood. He was a brutal, tyrannous man and led a stormy marital life. A niece whom he first adopted and later married (after the deaths of his first two wives) became Hitler's mother. After losing three children, she gave birth to Hitler in 1889. The bond between mother and son was unusually intense and protective as she was fearful of losing him as she had lost her other children, and also because of her husband's harsh character and the age difference between them—she was 23 years younger than he.

The mother's loving tenderness contrasting with the father's cruelty and rages (he frequently beat his son) might be reflected in the split between Hitler's later idealisation of Germany in *Mein Kampf* as the "faithful mother" and his condemnation of Austria as a traitorous father-figure, guilty, among other things, of sexual immorality, incestuous and Jewish. (Hitler's father, on the other hand, was proud of being Austrian and regarded being called *ein Deutsche*, a German, as an insult.)

Even if Hitler's father was not part-Jewish, Hitler apparently came to suspect that he was, and the intensity of his later anti-Semitism might, therefore, have originated partly in his hatred of—and identification with—what he perceived his father as being. Also, the loss of his older siblings and of a younger brother who died when he was about 11 might have predisposed him to a later feeling of being chosen, infallible and invincible. It may be that Hitler's monorchism—the Russian autopsy report revealed that one of his testicles had not descended—intensified the pathological tendencies created by tensions within his family.

Other characteristics of Hitler in later life might also be related to his family structure: his mother's overly-close, anxious attachment to him might have contributed to his later aversion to normal hetrosexual relations (he said that he was "married" to Germany) and the repudiation of his "feminine" softness, weakness and fear (he suffered from innumerable phobias) in favour of an extreme masculine ideal of toughness and brutality. His relationship to the German masses, as he saw it, was one of man to woman, and it might have involved a displaced incestuous attachment to his mother.

Leaving such conjectures aside, the deaths of Hitler's parents when he was in his teens were doubtless crucial in the growth of his psychopathology. His reaction to his father's sudden death in 1903 is unknown, but apart from grief, it might have included an element of relief at being rid of a tyrant and guilt at having wanted his death. The death of his mother, however, was perhaps the greatest blow in his life. She died slowly of cancer in 1907, and Hitler nursed her during her last two months. Her doctor was a Jew. Eduard Bloch, who used the primitive, largely ineffectual, evil-smelling treatments then available.

WAS THE DOCTOR'S JEWISHNESS a factor in Hitler's later anti-Semitism? In his speeches, he frequently referred to the Jews as a stench-ridden cancer which had to be cut out if mother-Germany was to be saved. Also, he joined an anti-Semitic society several months after his mother's death. It is believed by some psychologists, including John Bowlby,[4] that the pathological nature of Hitler's anti-Semitism might be linked with the hatred which the bereaved often feels towards the doctors of the lost person. In Hitler's case, this hatred would have been exaggerated by his close dependence upon his mother and by other factors, personal as well as social. At any rate, Dr Bloch recalled thirty years later: "In all my career I have never seen anyone so prostrate with grief as Adolf Hitler. . . ." Hitler's periodic depressions in later life, during which he would contemplate or even threaten suicide, alternating with violent rages, might ultimately be traced, in part at least, to the effects of his mother's death.

Hitler's failure to gain admission to the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, which he later blamed on Jewish influence, was a further severe blow; and he spent the next few years as a down-and-out in Vienna hostels, earning a meagre livelihood from his paintings, sketches, and posters. This existence seems to have resulted less from the lack of prospects than from his broken emotional state after his mother's death.

Hitler's inability at this time and for the rest of his life to establish a loving relationship with a woman was brought about partly by his grief-ridden attachment to his mother. His relations with women were always tortured—six of the women with whom he was closely associated in later life either committed suicide or attempted to do so. According to Walter Langer's wartime report on Hitler for the American Secret Service,[5] several informants reported that Hitler had a sexual perversion known as coprophilia: he gained sexual pleasure by having women defecate or urinate on him. In clinical cases, Robert Waite has pointed out in his study of Hitler, *The Psychopathic God*, this condition is invariably found in those with overwhelming feelings of inferiority, guilt and masochism, all of which played a vital part in Hitler's

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[2] Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War against the Jews, 1933-1945* (1975); J. L. Talmon, "European History and the Seedbed of the Holocaust", in *Jewish Perspectives: 25 Years of Modern Jewish Writing* (ed. Sonntag, 1980).

[3] John Toland, *Adolf Hitler* (1976).

[4] John Bowlby, *Loss: Sadness and Depression*, Vol. 3 of *Attachment and Loss* (1980).

[5] Walter Langer, *The Mind of Adolf Hitler: The Secret Wartime Report* (1972).

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psychology and in the emergence within him of his opposite—the omnipotent, brutally unprincipled *Führer*.[6]

In pre-War Vienna, however, this persona had not yet formed, and those who knew Hitler at the time remembered that he looked more like a stereotype of a Jew than like an Aryan "Superman." He was an impoverished, shabby youth, in poor physical condition, insecure and excitable, living in his own world of fantasy, not lacking in intelligence and charm, and he had clearly been through a lot in life.

The hostels in which Hitler lived were supported by Jewish charities, and it may be that the humiliation of having to undergo shower and disinfectant before entering was associated in Hitler's mind with the Jews and became part of the imagery of his later lust for revenge. At this time, however, he apparently did not use the Jews as an outlet for his aggressions and frustrations, though he read popular anti-Semitic literature.

The outbreak of war in 1914 was a tremendous relief to him. He joined the German (not the Austro-Hungarian) army and was, by all accounts, obedient, loyal and brave under fire. In the fight for Germany, Hitler's apathy and depression seem to have vanished and were replaced by a sense of pride, security and belonging, as well as by an aim in life.

If there was a single point in Hitler's life when the "psychopathic god" was born in him, when his relatively conventional problems, drives and prejudices crossed the border into dangerous insanity, that point was reached when Germany lost the War. At the time of Germany's surrender, Hitler was particularly susceptible to a psychotic reaction. In a mustard-gas attack in October 1918, he was blinded. For several weeks he lay in hospital recovering his sight. When news came of Germany's unexpected surrender, he went blind again.

The hysterical nature of this blindness might be explained in psychological terms. For example, that as Germany was equated in Hitler's mind with the "faithful mother", her defeat might have revived the terrible grief which he felt on losing his mother; or that this defeat called up Hitler's alleged rage at his father for maltreating, perhaps sexually abusing, his mother. Whatever happened, a transformation took place inside Hitler: he heard visionary voices summoning him to liberate Germany and lead her to greatness. At this point, he claimed, his sight returned and he vowed to enter politics.

Hitler's full-blown anti-Semitism apparently emerged at this time, when "international Jewry" was not infrequently blamed for Germany's defeat, for the Russian Revolution and the Communist threat. Lucy Dawidowicz, in *The War against the Jews 1933-45*, has shown how completely Hitler was a product of his environment:

> "People living in an anti-Semitic *milieu*—as Hitler did—already viewed Jews as diseased and filthy creatures, degenerate and corrupting, outsiders beyond fraternity and compassion. Since the society had already branded the Jews as loathsome pariahs, the Jews could then serve the symbolic and pathological needs of the obsessed and the guilt-ridden."

Germany, in short, could be considered ripe for a psychopathic anti-Semitic ruler. The Church had always legitimised hatred of the Jews as the killers of Christ; German political leaders since Bismarck had used anti-Semitism as a political tool to gain power; popular German literature was full of virulently racist ideas which Hitler drew upon. When in 1920 the anti-Semitic forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* appeared in German, it sold 120,000 copies by the end of the year. Amid the insecurities and weak government of the post-War years, Germany looked for a strong leader and a scapegoat.

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[6] Robert Waite, *The Psychopathic God: Adolf Hitler* (1977).
[7] See, especially, Charles Osborne, *Wagner and His World* (1977).

Hitler . . . & Samuel Johnson

"To revenge reasonable incredulity by refusing evidence is a degree of insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt."

This was not quite how the judge summed up yesterday's conviction of the men involved with the "Hitler Diaries." But the German judiciary has never been particularly renowned for a happy turn of phrase when the occasion demands it.

Samuel Johnson, as we know, was different, and the question of fraud was known to provoke his most eloquent wrath. His attack on MacPherson's forgeries of "Ossian", while the rest of the literary world swooned with romantic delusions, is a special testimony to the long tradition of English common sense.

"I will not desist from detecting what I think a cheat, from any fear of the menaces of a ruffian. You want me to retract? What shall I retract? I thought your book an imposture from the beginning, I think it upon yet surer reasons an imposture still."

This is not to say that forgery itself does not have a proud indigenous heritage. The 18th century saw, for example, the emergence of several previously obscure mediaeval monks, one of whom, Thomas Rowley (really a teenager called Thomas Chatterton), gained a significant following on the Continent. There is a curious point when the art of fraud gains a certain cachet, when its artistic merits, if combined with a certain romantic appeal, can outweigh any of its criminal underpinnings. It reaches the level of the refined practical joke.

This was hardly the case with the "Hitler Diaries", which showed none of the roguish panache of the huge practical joke, and precious little literary imagination. They committed the clever, but fatal crime of being extremely boring. Perhaps it was this which particularly attracted the "experts" from the salubrious recesses of Fleet Street and the ancient universities, eager to prove that interminable tedium was not their sole prerogative. Even megalomaniacs can be dull, we were asked to believe.

If only Johnson were still able to respond.

Daily Telegraph (*London*)

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To a large extent, too, 19th-century thinkers prepared the ground for Hitler and provided intellectual justification for his *Weltanschauung*. Apart from Richard Wagner, whose pathological hatred of the Jews[7] had the utmost influence upon Hitler and the rise of Nazism, other influences included Schopenhauer and his concept of the "triumph of the will", and Nietzsche with his emphasis upon the will-to-power and upon violence as a cleansing force. Perhaps most important of all, however, was Darwin's doctrine of natural selection, which was taken to justify racism and the idea that might makes right, and which, as one historian, the late Jacob Talmon, wrote, "brought down one of the strongest barriers protecting 'Thou shalt not kill'. . . ."

In Hitler's hands, the political, social and ideological norms were systematically pushed to their logical extremes, with the Jews as the main victims. "Anti-Semitism", Lucy Dawidowicz has emphasised, "was the core of Hitler's system of beliefs and the central motivation for his policies." Traditional suspicion, contempt and hatred of the Jews were turned by Hitler into mass paranoiac psychosis.

To read Hitler's account of the Jews in *Mein Kampf*, Alan Bullock has observed, is to enter the world of the insane. Yet, Hitler's dual image of the Jews as vermin to be exterminated and as a diabolical adversary was not uncommon in anti-Semitic literature. What was unusual was the sheer intensity of Hitler's hatred of the Jews. When he described the Jews as an "emasculating germ . . . a parasite . . . bacillus . . . leech . . . vampire . . . fungus . . . cancer . . . tuberculosis"—he meant it. "Only when we have eliminated the Jews", he wrote, "will we regain our health."

Emotionally crippled and perverse himself, surrounded by cripples, misfits and perverts, Hitler projected his self-image onto the Jews. The Jews, to Hitler, were symbolic of "the enemy within", of all that was both despicably weak and evilly omnipotent in him, and which threatened to engulf himself, Germany, and the world.[8]

Hitler must have genuinely believed that "the Jews", sexually perverse and diseased, morally corrupt and pernicious, were to blame for Germany's lack of unity and *Lebensraum*, that they, in fact, had lost the war for Germany and, symbolically, had "raped" the motherland. Communists, Socialists, Marxists, Democrats, Capitalists, and all his other enemies—including, in the end, Germany itself—were indiscriminately lumped together by Hitler under the single rubric "the Jews." His "holy mission" against the Jews, as he claimed in *Mein Kampf*, was "in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator: *by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord*. . . ."

Hitler gained the support of the German masses not because of his anti-Semitism as much as because he offered what was regarded as firm leadership in a severe crisis. Yet, once he became Chancellor, the German people were, for the most part, willing to embrace or acquiesce in his anti-Semitic policies.

How did Hitler's pathology correspond with the state of post-War Germany to the point that he became virtually identified with Germany?

The answer may lie in the transformation which he underwent in his speeches. He would usually begin nervously, uncertain and indecisive—the epitome of the German self-image in the wake of the 1914-18 débâcle and the 1929 crash. In the course of his speeches, he would become transformed into his opposite: hard, brutal, all-powerful, capable of sadistic mass-murder, heedless of conscience and guilt—*der Führer*. This transformation, which had an unmistakable sexual element, seems to have hypnotised his audiences and provoked in them an almost orgasmic reaction, for it expressed, in an extreme form, their own secret desire to be transformed, to be omnipotent and victorious.

However, in order to convince himself that *der Führer* was real, Hitler continually had to suppress his natural uncertainties and indecisiveness, and to deny all weakness in him. In so doing, he committed himself and Germany to an increasingly radical path from which there was no retreat. It is significant, perhaps, that the implementation of the "Final Solution" began in earnest in 1942, shortly after Hitler's first military reverses, when the image of the *Führer*'s invincibility had begun to fade. By this time it was apparent that Hitler was not primarily the enemy of the Jews, but of all mankind, including Germany.

Forty years after Hitler's death and the end of World War II, the question remains: to what extent did Hitler create a National-Socialist Germany in his image, and to what extent was it the other way round? No doubt Hitler was at least partly mad. Who could conceive of monstrous Auschwitz unless, psychologically, Auschwitz was within him? Among the known factors, Hitler's background—the loss of several siblings, the distortions in his family life, the deaths of both parents when he was young—may well have predisposed him to pathological behaviour. The First World War did the rest. Yet, even in his obsessive hatred of the Jews, Hitler appeared to be the epitome of sanity to a great many Germans. Violent, unstable, self-destructive, Hitler was a creation and concave mirror-image of his country; and he came to power through the forceful correlation of his personal pathology with political crisis.

[8] See Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1974); William Carr, *Hitler: A Study in Personality and Politics* (1978).

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LETTERS

Stove's Popper

SIR KARL POPPER has had a paradoxical success. He is widely considered, among an educated public, as the greatest living philosopher, though he is treated amongst professional philosophers with cool enthusiasm. While there are courses for students to learn the wildest sociological fantasies about scientific knowledge, there are none which teach the commonsense approach of Popper to science (least of all where you would expect to find it, in the department he founded, which has gone Lakatosian, as I can testify from personal experience).

But why? I believe, after reading D. C. Stove's recent article, I can understand the cause of Popper's unpopularity.

Only a few students have the articulate intelligence to even consider becoming philosophers. For such students to become philosophers involves an active choice not to use that intelligence in having a successful career outside philosophy. Philosophers are peculiar people in having decided the non-financial rewards of spending a life trying to answer abstract questions as to the nature of things outweigh the large financial rewards they could easily have earned in a career in the outside world. But what is this non-financial reward they find in philosophy?

Popper has noted a basic characteristic of the human mind. It does not like too much uncertainty. People are mentally unprepared for the changeability of the modern world, after being evolved to live in the unchanging closed world of the primitive tribe. As a consequence, in the modern world, they feel insecure. To find a new source of security, many turn to ideas. This offers them the hope they may alleviate their sense of insecurity by finding, in the intellectual world of ideas, something certain and unchanging. This hope, I suggest, is the non-financial reward which makes students decide to become philosophers.

As a consequence, the profession of philosophy is biased to view its activity as the finding of intellectual certainties. Of course, Popper's ideas are anathema to such people. He has revolutionised the way we understand the problems underlying intellectual activity, particularly in science, in showing them to be open, possessing no definite solutions. Any solution proposed is uncertain, since tomorrow a better and previously unthought-of solution may come along and sweep our present ideas away.

Such an interpretation of the nature of intellectual activity denies certainty and so the non-financial reward which originally persuaded students to become philosophers. No wonder they are cool towards such views. And that occasionally, as in Stove's emotional *ad hominem* article, contempt is shown.

JOHN R. SKOYLES

London

WHAT AN extraordinary article in June's ENCOUNTER ("Karl Popper and the Jazz Age" by D. C. Stove) which contrived to simultaneously enrich the language of debate and impoverish its substance!

In seeing Popperism as a British fad of the 1930s the author seems to be blinding himself to a number of points:

(*1*) The wide currency among scientists of the theory of science expounded in *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* can be ascribed to two factors. Firstly there is the success of the theory in distinguishing non-science from science and providing a sound framework for science. Secondly, there is the need (in 1985 as much as in 1935) felt by scientists for such a framework in view of uncertainty within science, especially theoretical physics since 1887, and threats from outside science exemplified by the pretension to scientific authority of Marxists, Freudians, and others.

(*2*) Whether the invention by Popper of his theory was sparked off by an aphorism of Nietzsche, a song by Cole Porter, or Samuel Butler's book has no bearing on the validity of the theory itself.

(*3*) Again, if a later generation of philosophers have borrowed some of the basic ideas of Popper's theory and got themselves into murky water, does this invalidate the theory?

(*4*) Surely no one will credit that such simple sloganising as equating "irrefutable" and "unfalsifiable" would bring success, particularly among scientists (who are notoriously insensitive to subtleties of language) to an otherwise empty theory. Indeed the author himself appears to be sloganising in claiming Popper taught that "we cannot learn anything about the actual universe even by experience" or in claiming that "Almost any drongo can do normal science."

It is my view that the gradual development of the scientific method is one of the great achievements of Western culture, and that Popper's encapsulation of it deserves still greater currency among scientists, technologists, economists, and especially the intellectual slum-dwellers who stand to benefit most of all.

STEVEN R. WRAY

Loughborough

Reply by D. C. Stove

MR JOHN R. SKOYLES sets out, at least, from some known facts: namely that Popper's philosophy is well-regarded by many non-philosophers, but by few philosophers. The former fact certainly calls for some special explanation, and my own attempts to explain it were given in my article. Mr Skoyles, however, thinks that the latter fact is even more in need of explanation, and he offers a theory of his own, about the psychology of philosophers, in order to explain it.

But this is carrying coals to Newcastle: there is no need whatever for Mr Skoyles's theory, or for any theory, on this matter. The poor opinion which many philosophers have of Karl Popper's philosophy is sufficiently explained by two *facts* which are notorious among professional philosophers.

The first fact is that Popper's philosophy entails that "*There are DNA molecules*" (and countless other scientific assertions of existence) is non-scientific; that "*The half-life of radium is 1600 years*" (and countless other scientific generalisations of a probabilistic kind) is non-scientific; that Newton's physics, Darwin's theory of evolution, and indeed any typical scientific theory, are non-scientific. Now could anyone devise, even if he set his mind deliberately to it, a conception of scientific statements which had consequences more ludicrously false than these?

The second fact is that Popper's philosophy entails that there can never be a good reason to believe any scientific theory whatever. Nor is this a conclusion which Popper arrives at with reluctance. On the contrary, he exults in it, and even dismisses, out of hand and quite generally, the very idea of rational belief. (See, for example, *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*, ed. Schilpp, p. 69, p. 1043.) Now, against the members of my profession, much may be said with plausibility, and almost as much with truth. But give philosophers their due, hardly any of them are outright lunatics. So if a person tells them (whether that person be Pyrrho, or Sextus Empiricus, or Hume, or Popper) that there is no good reason to believe that their blood circulates, no good reason to believe that nuclear explosions can damage your health, and so on—well then, philosophers very naturally and rationally treat the sayings of this person with diminishing respect.

As to the popularity of Popper's philosophy among *scientists*, Mr Steven R. Wray supposes this to be explained

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in part by "the success of [Popper's] theory in distinguishing non-science from science." But there *is* no such success (see the last paragraph but one above). So nothing can be explained by such "success."

D. C. STOVE

University of Sydney

Churchill Gambit & the German Checkmate

A Diplomat Looks Back—By SIR FRANK ROBERTS

IN "Churchill's Last Gambit" [ENCOUNTER, April] Anthony Glees has made a stimulating and valuable contribution to the recent renewal, so far in rather muted tones, of discussion in Germany and elsewhere on the question of whether opportunities were missed in the early 1950s to promote the reunification of West and East Germany, before West Germany became integrated into the European Communities and NATO.

He is quite right in drawing attention and incidentally giving full weight to the misgivings which the Foreign Office felt about the substance and the timing of Churchill's enthusiasm for reopening the dialogue with the new leadership in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death. I have no quarrel therefore with the general tenor of Anthony Glees' reconstruction of this chapter in the Churchill saga. But perhaps I may be allowed to add the following footnotes.

The general reader might be forgiven for supposing that in Anthony Glees' view it was only the officials in the Foreign Office who thought it their duty, like the Chiefs-of-Staff during the War, to prevent established and well-tried policies being swept away on yet another daring flight of Churchillian imagination. It is true that Churchill had temporarily taken charge of the Foreign Office; but we remained the servants of our only temporarily-incapacitated but highly-experienced Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, whose policies and caution we were reflecting with all the more conviction since his record in striving for good relations with the Soviet Union had been more consistent than that of Churchill and covered a longer period. We also had with us in the Foreign Office as Ministers over this period two of Eden's then closest friends and colleagues, Anthony Nutting and later Lord Salisbury, whom I accompanied to Washington in 1953 when he represented HMG after Churchill had joined Eden on the sick list.

On the timing of Churchill's proposed initiative, our doubts related to the existence so soon after Stalin's death of any established new leadership with whom any useful deals could be struck.

The first candidate, Beria, was shot by his colleagues after and perhaps partly because his German policies were thought to have contributed to the riots in East Berlin and elsewhere in East Germany, news of which I took to Churchill.

The next, Malenkov, sat uneasily in the saddle until he was unseated by Khrushchev, who then had to defeat the old gang led by Molotov before at last achieving effective leadership himself many months and indeed years after Stalin's death. Meanwhile, throughout 1953 and at the Berlin Conference early in 1954 it was that old and "Stalinist" leader, Molotov, with whom we had to deal. Incidentally, the record suggests we should be very careful in dividing Soviet leaders into "moderates" and "hard liners." The previously tough Malenkov was regarded as a moderate when he became leader—to be ousted by a "tough" Khrushchev, who then became a "moderate"—a process repeated by Brezhnev.

SO IT WAS NOT ONLY traditional and no doubt sometimes excessive professional caution which led the Foreign Office to advise waiting for this power struggle to produce the real new leadership before embarking upon major new initiatives, more especially since the whole idea was strongly opposed by our major allies in Washington and Paris, as well as by Dr Adenauer in Bonn. After all, one of Eden's main qualities as a Foreign Minister was his sense of timing and he certainly had not felt that the timing was right immediately after Stalin's death. In the volume *Full Circle* of his memoirs, Eden writes that "although the death of Stalin brought some modification in the techniques of Moscow's foreign policy, its real character was unchanged. . . ." He also points out that the Soviet reply to Eisenhower's request for deeds in attestation of "the sincerity of peaceful purposes" yielded nothing.

On the substance, Mr Glees makes it quite clear that Churchill's gambit involved a complete reversal of the policies then being pursued in common by the US, British, and French Governments, with the full agreement of the West German authorities, for restoring sovereignty to West Germany and integrating her into the political, economic and military structure of the Western democratic world. Great progress had been made since 1948, but final decisions had not been taken. For the French (and therefore in practice for all three Allies) West German membership of the proposed European Defence Community was a condition for the entry into force of the Bonn Agreements restoring West German sovereignty. The Soviet Government's main priority had been and remained to prevent this, just as in 1948 Stalin had instituted the Berlin blockade to frighten the Western allies (and also the Germans) away from setting up a separate West German state structure.

Already in 1952 Stalin himself had made proposals for German reunification, about which there was and still is some controversy. Some believe they were seriously meant and that an opportunity to achieve or at least move towards German reunification may have been lost. Others—and they included the three Western Governments and, of course, Adenauer and his colleagues—saw them as a tactical move with similar negative motivation to that behind Stalin's rougher actions in 1948.

Eden and his Foreign Office staff were, however, not opposed to German reunification. How could they be? Eden, when writing down what he described as "his own thoughts" on the German problem, set out as the most important Western requirement to reach agreement on the reunification of Germany as a free democratic state, while progress towards a German peace treaty was in his view the main positive Western objective. But such a reunited Germany could only safely be brought into existence by genuinely free elections (always refused, or evaded, by Molotov) and it should in his view have genuine freedom of choice in its policies. It was assumed that the choice would be for a Western orientation; but we, unlike the Russians, were prepared to leave this to the Germans. Eden also set down what he described as an important negative objective—that of frustrating Soviet delaying tactics which would have prevented the completion of the existing policies for West German independence accompanied by the establishment of the European Defence Community.

CHURCHILL'S PROPOSED INITIATIVE in 1953 would, at best, have put all this at risk and made an already delicate diplomatic exercise that much more

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difficult. Or, at worst, it could have given the Russians the opportunity they were seeking to divide the Western Allies from the Germans and among themselves. Their aim was to evade free elections in Germany, as they had effectively got round them in Poland, and to concentrate discussion upon the setting up of a nominated all-German Government with no freedom to decide its own policies, and subjected to a régime of armed or disarmed neutrality. As Eden asked the House of Commons after the Berlin Conference of 1954,

> "Was Germany to be neutral and disarmed? If so, who will keep Germany disarmed? Or is Germany to be neutral and armed? If so, who will keep Germany neutral?"

Anthony Glees concludes that Adenauer was the main winner in 1953-54, and he suggests at one point that Foreign Office officials may at that time have been "too" sympathetic to Adenauer. I think this charge, if such it is, needs to be put into the context of 1953-54 and indeed of the first post-War decade. On the personality issue it should not be forgotten that the post-War Labour Government from 1945-51, and in particular Ernest Bevin (under whom I served as closely as I did before and since under Eden and Churchill), would have preferred to see West Germany built up again under socialist leadership. But the difficult and uncooperative character of the SPD leader Kurt Schumacher, and his determination not to appear unduly influenced by the Occupation authorities, had contrasted unfavourably with Adenauer's pragmatic commonsense approach. In any case, to quote a socialist, Paul-Henri Spaak, the only governments with which one could be officially concerned in our dealings were those in office, not "shadows in opposition."

Nor should we forget that the West Germany of 1953 was a very much weaker and more vulnerable country, in a very much weaker Western Europe, than the economically powerful and politically stable Federal Republic of today within the European Community and NATO. As recently as 1950 the Korean War had faced the West with the possibility of a similar Communist push westwards against very little military resistance. The price not unnaturally demanded by the Americans for sending their troops back to Europe had been participation by the Germans in their own and the common defence, difficult though this was at that time for the French to accept. Neither West Germany alone nor a reunified Germany had the strength, economic, military or political, to be left safely on its own in the heart of Europe, to conduct a reliable policy of "neutrality" between East and West. To all those then responsible for Western policies towards Germany, in Washington, Paris and in London, the risks in such a reversal of policies seemed—and I still think were—too great. This was also the view of Adenauer and his colleagues in Germany. One thing united East and West in their attitudes towards Germany at that time. For each side the-bird-in-the-hand was much more important than two-in-the-bush.

Had Winston Churchill's "last gambit" been adopted we might well have found that our bird had flown away without bringing us any closer to the two still in the bush.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND Mr Glees' question why German leaders remain committed to the aim of a single German state seems valid.

The simple legal answer lies in the German "*Basic Law*", which enjoins such a commitment upon them, and more generally in the very natural aspirations of the Germans in the Federal Republic for "national unity" in the sense that the Germans in the Democratic Republic should one day have the right and the opportunity to opt for reunification if that is their wish. As Chancellor Kohl has made clear in a recent statement in the *Bundestag*, this is not a demand for former (nor indeed for any specific) frontiers; and resort to force has been clearly and repeatedly renounced. Germany's allies, who were once the Occupying powers, should not forget that they also are committed under the arrangements of 1954 to support this German aspiration for eventual reunification. I have not, however, met any German who thinks of such reunification in terms of the foreseeable future or indeed of any calculable time scale. But there has certainly been a revival of concern in Germany over "the German question" which was not evident during my time as British Ambassador in the mid-1960s, when indeed a song on German reunification in the Berlin political cabaret, *Die Stachelschweine*, ended with the refrain "In Bonn they are always talking about it, but never thinking about it. . . ."

ONE LAST FOOTNOTE on Churchill's quoted remark about disclosing the facts of what happened at Yalta, and in particular his reference to President Roosevelt's secret commitments at Yalta.

My recollection of Yalta, where I was handling the Polish and German questions, is that any secret commitments related mainly to the Far East. There was, at all events, no secret about Churchill's views on the Polish frontier, which is specifically mentioned by Mr Glees in this context. The British had since the Versailles settlement advocated the "Curzon line" for Poland's eastern frontier and the Anglo-Polish Alliance of 1939 specifically did *not* cover Polish territorial integrity. Churchill had advocated compensation for a restored Poland at Germany's expense in the west, but had wanted to leave open the future of Upper Silesia (the area between the Eastern and Western Neisse) and that of some districts around Stettin. But I cannot recall secret commitments to Stalin concerning Poland either by Churchill or Roosevelt.

FRANK ROBERTS

London

Victorian Falklands

TODAY, ON THE anniversary of the start of the Falkland war, is a good occasion to tell you that I found Edward Pearce's article on "The Far-Away Falklands" (ENCOUNTER, April) brilliant and to the point. It exposes the political-military folly of the Thatcher Government, without condoning in the least the irrational-emotional folly of the Galtieri Administration. Above all, it makes it clear how much an exercise in futility all this has been—and still is.

At the same time, I was amazed to see that there still exist views as condescending and Victorian as those expressed by Julian Amery. There is not much point in going into a detailed criticism of his thesis. Suffice it to say that if you start from the mistaken claim that "Britain is very much a South Atlantic power", all other mistaken conclusions follow easily. Therefore, it is just as much a mistake to assume that Britain is the power called upon to guard the South Atlantic sea lanes, as it is a mistake to assume that the other South American nations welcome a British military presence in the Falklands. Above all, it is a colossal mistake to assume that, having an airfield and some port facilities in the Falklands in any way improves Britain's claim, historically, economically or otherwise, on the Antarctic. That attitude, too, is Victorian. The game is no longer played that way.

PAUL HIRSCH

Buenos Aires

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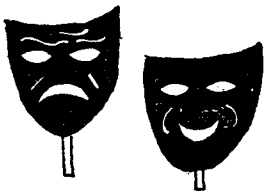
Life & Letters Today

London



"FRANGLAIS" (AGAIN): *If the Royal Shakespeare Company are lost for words this morning, they probably feel it's a pity their mime artist was not similarly dumbstruck.*

Jean Louis Barrault's advertised programme of mime drew disbelief and heckles from a Barbican audience when he stopped miming to deliver an intolerably long speech in French without translation. A minor Gallic war broke out in the audience between the "au fait" faction and those who couldn't understand the language.

As cheers and jeers rang out, one satisfied customer yelled "Go and learn French!"

To the RSC's surprise not only did a sneak, from SW12, report them to the Advertising Standards Authority, but his complaint has been upheld.

"The advertisers stated that they had understood from the agent's information and Press notices of past performances that the appearance would be in the form of a mime performance. They were also expecting that it would be delivered in M. Barrault's 'inimitable Franglais', but this was changed at the last moment. . . ."

Clearly a case of words speaking louder than actions.

THE STANDARD

London

BATTY: ***Die Fledermaus*** **at the Royal Opera for Christmas and New Year is quickly becoming part of the annual ritual.**

Seven years ago, when it was televised live around Europe and America, Gerhard Bronner's trendily polyglot reworking of the text seemed a clever idea. Even on Saturday, to judge from the number of expensive foreign accents in the stalls, the point of an EEC standardized version of the piece was not lost. But, to irredeemable Little Englanders like me, the experience of acres of dialogue lurching out of German into other languages in an English opera house with an almost entirely English-speaking cast was like, say, translating *The Mikado* into Japanese with flashes of Icelandic.

THE TIMES

California

VIVA INGLÉS!: *The citrus-growing town of Fillmore, California, has adopted a resolution stating that* **"the English language is the official language of the City of Fillmore,"** *thus making it the first city in the United States to make such an endorsement of English.*

Five states—Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Nebraska and Virginia—have adopted similar resolutions, but their foreign-born or non-English-speaking populations are relatively small. Of Fillmore's 10,000 people, 51% are **"Latinos"**, *of Latin American origin.*

The city council is dominated by **"Anglos."** *Though the one-sentence resolution they passed has no provision for enforcement, City Councilmen said that people wanted to "vent their frustration about bilingual education."*

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

New York

SPOCK-MARKED: **First published in 1945, Dr. Benjamin Spock's book "Baby and Child Care" remains the best-selling guide to child-rearing. But anxious parents thumbing through the 40th anniversary edition in the middle of the night for advice on colic or croup also get a disconcerting dose of politics.**

The new text, written with a co-author, Michael B. Rothenberg, provides simple prescriptions on the subjects of diaper rash, chicken pox, and nuclear war. To allay childhood fears about the Arms Race, the pediatricians urge parents to support the Nuclear Freeze movement and candidates who endorse a Freeze.

NEW YORK TIMES

London

RELIGION FOR BEGINNERS: *A fast-selling religious education textbook is to be toned down in its second edition after a Church of England canon complained that it encouraged 10- and 11-year-olds to dabble in the occult.*

"Beginning Religion", by Ray Bruce and Jane Warbank, is described by the publisher, Edward Arnold, as a "refreshing introduction to religious studies."

But Canon John Short, of Christ Church and St John's in New Malden, said yesterday that he was "appalled."

"Not only does it make no mention whatsoever of the existence of a revealed God, but it also alarmingly encourages children into the danger areas of the occult, voodoo and black magic."

The book, which has sold 20,000 copies since it was published in 1982, concentrates on primitive and natural religion. It suggests as "things to do" for 10- and 11-year-olds:

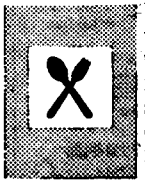
Finding out what happens in a seance;
Making up "spells," recording them in "a spooky voice" and watching the effect of the recording on the rest of the class;
Making a drawing of things used for predicting the future, and speculating on how they are used;
Using a dictionary to find out what "voodoo" is;
Thinking of reasons why "evil magic might work."

A companion volume deals with Christianity.

Mr Michael Soper, marketing director of Edward Arnold, said yesterday that another complaint received about "Beginning Religion" had come from the Inner London Education Authority, which was concerned about possible "racism" in the book—(black magic).

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Amsterdam



WORD PICTURES: **Railway station indicators which convey messages by pictures rather than words are not clearly understood by many passengers. Dutch investigations have shown that about a third of the passengers did not readily understand the information intended.**

Of 12,000 passengers tested on 29 signs less than a third fully understood signs about Luggage and two-thirds were confused by the Buffet picture. Just under half the passengers did not recognise the Ticket Office sign and more than a third mislaid the Buses—represented by a picture of a bus.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

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Studying Women

THE LESBIAN ISSUE
Essays from Signs
Edited by Estelle Freedman et al.
The contributors to this landmark volume are both male and female, homosexual and heterosexual. They cover a rich diversity of topics including lesbian writers, recent social science literature on lesbians, discrimination in the workplace, sexuality in Third World cultures, and lesbians in literature. The major themes throughout are lesbian identity and the survival, in homophobic cultures, of women who relate primarily to other women.

WOMEN, FAMILY, AND RITUAL IN RENAISSANCE ITALY
Christiane Klapisch-Zuber
Translated by Lydia G. Cochrane
A brilliant historian of the *Annales* school draws a vivid picture of the Italian family of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Working from the records of Florentine tax collectors and of heads of Tuscan households, she reveals not only the composition, values, and priorities of such households but fascinating domestic details including how children were named, wet nurses engaged, and marriages negotiated.

Women in Culture and Society

An important new series that considers women's lives and the construction of gender across academic disciplines

Catharine R. Stimpson,
Series Editor

THE LADY AND THE VIRGIN
Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France
Penny Schine Gold
Gold analyzes the literary and artistic images of women in the Middle Ages and the relationship between these images and the actual experience of women. She argues that the complex interaction between men and women, as expressed in both image and experience, reflects a common pattern of ambivalence and contradiction.

WOMEN, HISTORY, AND THEORY
The Essays of Joan Kelly
Joan Kelly
Kelly, a leader in the founding of the new scholarship about women, approached the study of women's history from the dual vantage point of Marxism and feminism, establishing a total realignment of perspectives on women in society from the Middle Ages to the present. The essays collected here present her most influential ideas on the reperiodization of history, the social relations of the sexes, and the family.

PROSTITUTION IN MEDIEVAL SOCIETY
The History of an Urban Institution in Languedoc
Leah Lydia Otis
In a pioneering work of social history, Otis uses the study of institutionalized prostitution in late medieval Languedoc to inquire into the social construction of sexuality, the growth of urban economies, and the struggle between lay and religious authorities to regulate public morality.

The University of Chicago Press

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